WALTER GEER

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The Story of a Corsican Clan

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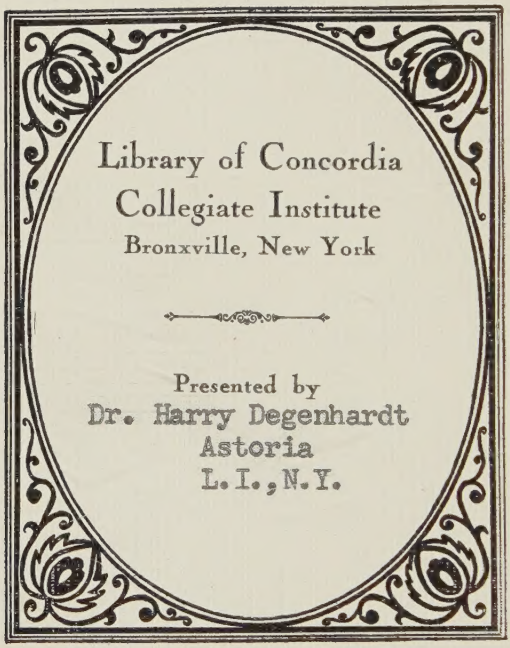

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HIS FAMILY

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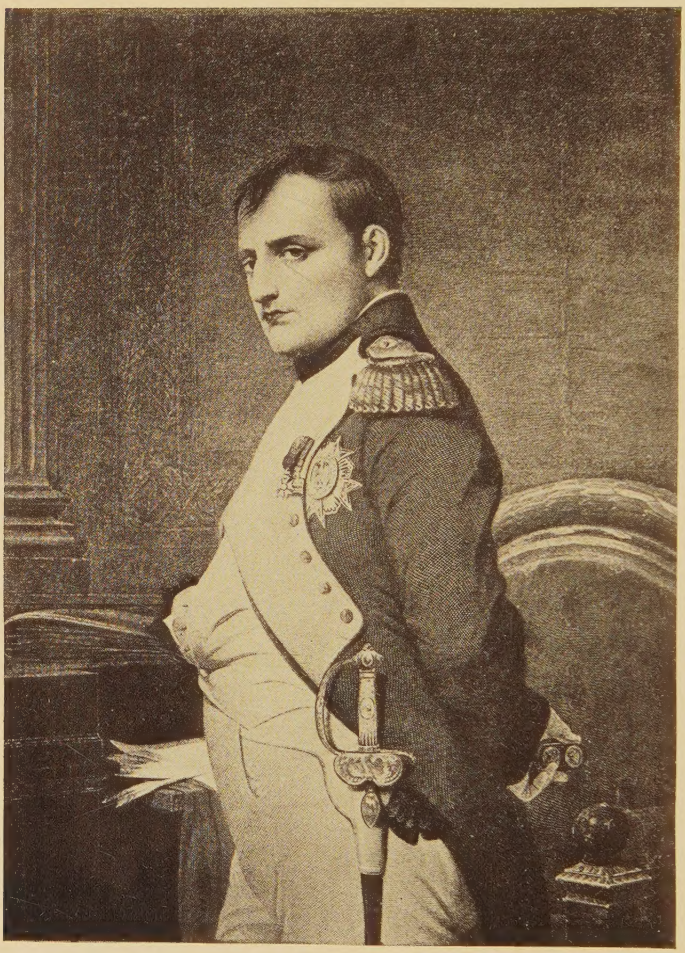

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The Story of A Corsican Clan

By WALTER GEER

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NAPOLEON
AND
HIS FAMILY

NAPOLEON AND HIS FAMILY

THE STORY OF A CORSICAN CLAN

CHAPTER TWENTY-THREE

JANUARY — OCTOBER 1809

THE AUSTRIAN CRISIS

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UPON his return from Spain, in January 1809, Napoleon began seriously to prepare for the campaign on the Danube. In order to give Austria no pretext for beginning hostilities, up to this date he had taken only a few precautionary measures. He had less than three months before him, but the time was sufficient for his purposes.

On the 8 April 1809, the Emperor issued his final orders for the organization of his army. He had six corps, under the command of Lannes, Davout, Masséna, Lefebvre, Augereau, and Bernadotte; the cavalry reserve under Bessières; and the Guard: about 300,000 men in all, of whom a third were German auxiliaries. In Italy, under Eugène, he had 100,000 troops, of whom about 20,000 were Italians.

It had been necessary for the Emperor practically to create a new army, formed mainly of young conscripts, who were poorly trained, badly equipped, and destitute of military experience. In the infantry, entire regiments were composed of

new recruits: only the cavalry and artillery contained a considerable proportion of old soldiers. It was a very different body of men from the Grand Army which he had led from the camp of Boulogne to the Danube four short years before. The veterans who had survived Austerlitz, Jena, Eylau, and Friedland, had perished by the thousand in Spain, where three of his marshals — Soult, Ney, and Victor — were still engaged. He also lacked his brilliant cavalry leader, Murat, who was detained at Naples.

The Austrian army, under the Archduke Charles, consisted of over 300,000 men, with 100,000 landwehr in reserve. It was divided, on the French model, into ten army corps: seven, under Charles, ready to invade Bavaria; two under Archduke John in Italy; and one under Archduke Ferdinand, to enter Poland. For over three years, these troops had been trained and disciplined by the Archduke Charles, a commander of high rank, and, next to Wellington, perhaps the greatest of Napoleon's contemporaries.

On paper, the odds were rather in favor of Austria, but the genius of Napoleon gave the French a marked superiority: "his presence on the field," said the Duke of Wellington, "made a difference of 40,000 men." [1]

When the Emperor left Valladolid for Paris, Joseph demanded that his brother should give him the supreme command of the French forces in Spain, and Napoleon weakly acquiesced. At that time, there were nearly 200,000 men in the Peninsula, divided in seven army corps, under the command of Soult, Mortier, Ney, Victor, Junot, Sébastiani, and Saint-Cyr. Bessières and Lannes, who were soon recalled to France, had special assignments. Among the six marshals, forty major-generals, and eighty brigadiers, there was not one who had not had more military experience, and who was not better fitted for the supreme command, than King Joseph! Nevertheless, affairs might have gone much better if the Emperor had not openly showed his lack of confidence in Joseph, by trying to keep, not

[1] Quoted 2 Rose, 194.

only the general supervision, but even the details of the operations, under his own direction; also, by authorizing the commanders to correspond directly with the chief-of-staff, Berthier; and later, when Berthier followed him to Austria, with the Minister of War. Joseph protested against this arrangement, and his grounds were well-taken. He suggested that the Minister of War should write directly to Jourdan; or, better still, that he should outline the general policy and plans of the Emperor, and permit the details to be worked out at Madrid. Napoleon, however, refused to make any change, and it is difficult to see how he could have placed two hundred thousand French soldiers under the orders of a king of Spain — even if he were his own brother. The whole arrangement was impossible, and could only result, as it did, in disaster.

The troops originally sent to Spain, although of a mixed and somewhat inferior character, were mainly French; but the men recalled to France for the Austrian campaign, and the losses, were replaced by soldiers from all the different States which composed the Grand-Empire. There were Swiss, Italians, Neapolitans, Hollanders, Hessians, Poles, and so on. These forces had marched at the call of the chief of the Grand-Empire, but they would never have obeyed the orders of the King of Spain. It would not have been easy for the Emperor himself to have controlled such a heterogeneous assembly of soldiers.

Napoleon had only one marshal, with the ability, the military experience, and the inflexible will, to control the situation in Spain, and that was Davout. But, since the signal triumph of this great soldier at Auerstädt, the Emperor had shown a reluctance to place him in an independent command — a hesitation which seemed almost like jealousy. Therefore, Joseph had no one to lean on except Jourdan, and Jourdan was absolutely incapable. Since his victory at Fleurus, during the Revolution, he had taken no part in any of the principal campaigns, and had been unfortunate, to say the least, in every command he held. He had never served under Napoleon, and did not understand his methods.

Joseph wrote the Emperor, to solicit for Jourdan the title of

Duc de Fleurus, and also demanded that all the marshals commanding the army corps in Spain should be recalled; for, he said in effect, it was necessary for the commander-in-chief to have under his orders generals, inferior to him in grade, who would obey him, and not comrades, who believed that they had greater merit than himself. These requests were refused, and Jourdan remained, to be the scapegoat for all the mistakes made by himself, by the King, by the corps-commanders, and even by the Emperor.

After the battle of Talavera, which Jourdan had claimed as a victory, in order to please the King, the patience of the Emperor was exhausted: Jourdan was ordered back to France, and Soult was placed in command of the French forces. All of the marshals serving in Spain were put under his orders, and he was authorized, if necessary, to call upon the other corps-commanders to coöperate with him.[2] With the exception of Davout, Soult was probably the best choice that the Emperor could have made. Very few of the marshals were fit for independent command.

If Joseph was destitute of all power over the army, his position in civil affairs was no better: practically every branch of his government was directed by the agents of the Emperor. "Sire," he wrote his brother, . . . "I am King of Spain only by the force of your arms; I could become so by the love of the Spaniards; but, for that, I must govern in my own manner. . . . I will be king as Your Majesty's brother ought to be, or I will return to Mortefontaine, where I shall ask only the happiness of living without humiliation, and dying with a tranquil conscience."

On receiving this letter, Napoleon said: "The King has written me that he wishes to return to Mortefontaine. He thinks that that will embarrass me; he takes advantage of a moment when my hands are full — that is contemptible! He threatens me, when I have left him my best troops, and I am on my way to Vienna with my little conscripts, my name, and my big

[2] Letter of 26 September 1809.

boots. . . . What then is Mortefontaine? It is the price of the blood I shed in Italy. Did he receive it from his father — from his labors? He received it from me. . . . When the King says that he will return to Mortefontaine, does he think that I will permit it? When he has declared himself my enemy, I shall treat him as such. He is wholly incapable of living in retreat: he thinks that he can live at Mortefontaine — he flatters himself decidedly! "[3]

Napoleon did not, for a moment, take this threat of Joseph's seriously. He knew that his brother had no more desire to return to France than he himself had to see him return. The Emperor held firmly to his position that, the insurrection had annulled all of the acts of Bayonne; that, having reconquered Spain, he had the right to dictate his orders, and his brother must execute them.[4]

The situation in Spain was really an *impasse:* "For, either Spain should be treated by France as a conquered country — and there was no place there for a King of Spain — or Spain should be turned back to Joseph, as he demanded — and he could not stay there unless maintained by three hundred thousand Imperial bayonets."[5]

Napoleon himself seems to have felt that the position was one from which there was no happy outcome. After he left Paris for the front in April, we find no letters to Joseph on official matters. His orders, transmitted through the Minister of War, are limited to counsels of vigor and activity, and censure for "kindness and clemency which lead to nothing." He deferred any final action until his return to Paris. Then, as we shall see, his time was taken up with the divorce, and his new marriage; so, the affairs of Spain were allowed to drift until the end. From first to last, the cost of his Spanish policy was half a million men and five hundred million francs.[6] Well might he exclaim at Saint Helena: "It was the Spanish ulcer which ruined me! "

[3] Rœderer, 3 *Mémoires,* 549.
[4] *Ibid.,* 538.
[5] 4 Masson, 373.
[6] *Ibid.,* 381.

If Joseph aspired to be a Spaniard, and regarded *Majesté Catholique* as his most glorious title, Louis considered himself a pure-blooded Hollander. He spoke only the native tongue, though not fluently; he allowed the smoking of pipes in his palace on reception days, although it made him sick. He had sent away all of the French at his Court, and had only Hollanders. The only one who remained in his good graces was Decazes, who kept him informed by letters of all the events of Paris. One of his principal grievances against Hortense was that she insisted on remaining a Parisienne.

On the 24 April 1808, Louis announced at Amsterdam by salvos of artillery the birth of a prince.[7] The same day he wrote Hortense: "M. de Bylandt arrived in less than fifty hours and brought me the news of your accouchement. I have begged mama and Mme. de Boubers to let me know exactly how you are. I hope that they will soon send me word that you are up again. I should like to have the child *ondoyé* only, in order that he may be solemnly baptized here; but I subordinate my desire entirely to yours and that of the Emperor. Adieu, Madame."

This was brief and cold; but at that moment he evidently was free from the suspicions which afterwards tormented him. In a letter to Hortense, the Emperor directed that the child should be called Charles-Napoleon, but Louis decided upon Charles-Louis-Napoleon. Nevertheless, in a letter to Napoleon, under date of 14 May, Louis wrote: " Je me conformerai avec empressement aux désirs de Votre Majesté sur les noms à donner à *son fils*." Did he no longer think that it was his own son? According to the accoucheurs, the child was born three weeks too soon; and, in ignorance of this fact, the date may have aroused Louis's doubts. But how could he possibly suspect Napoleon, who had not seen Hortense in eleven months, at the time of her arrival at Saint-Cloud the 27 August 1807, when she was already enceinte?

During the first eight months of 1808, the relations between the Emperor and Louis were quite cordial. The King enforced

[7] The future Emperor Napoleon the Third, born at Paris 20 April 1808.

the blockade so strictly that the trade of Holland was seriously affected. Importations fell off seventy-nine millions, and exportations, sixty-five millions; only 361 deep-sea vessels entered Amsterdam in 1808, as compared with 1450 the previous year. When the Emperor asked for reënforcements for his army in Spain, Louis promptly despatched his best brigade, of three thousand men.

Then, through the acts of the Emperor, their relations again became critical. For two years, Louis had begged Hortense to send him their elder son, but she had either found some good excuse, or neglected to answer his letters. His appeals to the Emperor had also failed of effect. Finally, on the 3 March 1809, the Emperor decided the question by ceding "the grand-duchy of Berg and of Cleves to his nephew, the Prince Napoleon-Louis, eldest son of his dearly-loved brother, the King of Holland." Until the majority of the young prince, the Emperor reserved for himself the government of the grand-duchy; and, in conformity with the laws of the Imperial Family, he took charge of the guardianship of the prince. As he delegated this charge to Hortense, the trick was turned, and with every appearance of legality.

Nothing was said on the subject of the relations of the young crown-prince to the throne of Holland; and this step might well have been regarded as presaging the annexation of Holland to the Empire. It is strange that Louis, usually so suspicious, had no apprehensions on this point, and seemed delighted at the honor conferred upon his son. In a special message to the Council of State and the Legislative Body, he announced the matter as "the most favorable augury for the happiness of his people and for that of his cherished son." Even ten years later, when he wrote his *Considérations sur la Hollande,* he still took the same point of view.

At the outbreak of the Austrian war Holland was almost entirely destitute of troops, and was open to an attack by the English. Louis wrote the Emperor on the subject early in April, calling his attention to the fact that one of the Holland

divisions was in Spain, and another in Northern Germany. He said that, under the circumstances, he could not prevent Walcheren, or even Amsterdam, from being seized by a *coup de main*. He had scarcely 9000 troops in Holland, and Flushing had a garrison of less than 4000 effectives.

The Emperor made no reply. He was so short of troops himself that he could not spare any for the defence of Holland; and he pretended to scoff at Louis's fears of an English attack.

In July, Louis passed a few days at Aix, where Madame and Pauline were taking the waters. He was there, when he received news that an English fleet of 264 warships and 400 or 500 transports had appeared before Walcheren, and landed a force of 45,000 men. Louis rushed back to Holland, assembled 8000 troops, and took command of all the French forces in Belgium, by virtue of his rank as Constable of France.

The Emperor, who was then at Vienna, conducting the peace negotiations with Austria, was afraid that this descent of the English on Walcheren might compromise all his plans, and he found fault with all the measures taken by Louis. Although he himself was solely responsible for the defenceless condition of the Netherlands, he laid all the blame on Louis, most unjustly accusing his brother of inefficiency and neglect. He sent reenforcements under Bernadotte, to whom he gave the supreme command of all the troops. Louis, who had shown remarkable zeal and activity, then returned to his kingdom, leaving most of the Holland troops with the Prince de Ponte-Corvo.

Notwithstanding all the services of Louis, the Emperor continued to heap reproaches upon him. In fact, Napoleon had regretted for some time that he had not annexed Holland to the Empire in the first instance. He was now determined to use this affair as a pretext for occupying with his troops the whole coast of Holland; and then gradually, by further exactions, to render Louis's position so unbearable that he would be forced to abdicate.

The brutality of Napoleon's letters is almost beyond belief. "This poor nation of Holland is much to be pitied," he wrote. "Her suffering is due to the instability of your character and

the lack of judgment in your measures." From abuse, he turns to irony, which is even more wounding: Louis is a hypocrite, he is the laughing-stock of Europe, he is "trying to dim the glory of the Emperor, if such a thing be possible in the case of a man like him, who has never done anything."

Louis, however, was not yet ready to give up — either from a sense of duty to Holland, or through a natural reluctance to admit that his reign was a failure. Finding that his brother had assumed this position of passive resistance, Napoleon proceeded to further exactions. In October 1809, he demanded: (1) that his brother maintain a permanent force of 13,000 men; (2) that the fleet of Holland be placed entirely under the orders of his generals; and (3) that all prizes taken by the French ships in the waters of Holland be judged by the Imperial courts. Louis agreed to all of these demands except the last, which in effect would deprive Holland of the sovereignty of her own territorial waters. He wrote the Emperor: "If Your Majesty persists in this resolution . . . I have nothing left to do except to order the horses attached to my travelling-coach; all is over for me. . . . There is only one course possible, if Your Majesty insists — that is to replace me by my son."

Napoleon replied: "It is wholly impossible for Holland to retain its independence in the manner desired by the King; . . . if the King abdicates, my intention is, in no case, to replace him by the crown-prince." He then goes on to say that the King may find his happiness in the quiet of private life, or in a sovereignty in a climate more suitable to his health; but that "his throne had been destroyed by the English descent, which had demonstrated the nullity of his resources"; that the Emperor "could no longer confide to any one the defence of the Scheldt"; in short that "Holland could no longer exist."

Already regretting that he had placed Joseph on the throne of Spain, and given Holland to Louis, the Emperor had even greater reason to be dissatisfied with Westphalia, where Jérôme continued to pile up debts, and to commit one act of folly after another. The Kingdom owed the Empire over twenty millions,

on account of the arrears in the military assessments, and had failed on every side to float a loan to take up this indebtedness. Besides this, Jérôme personally had borrowed large sums from the Jews, at usurious rates of interest, and his own credit was practically exhausted.

During the Austrian war, the patriotic ardor of the Germans led to two attempts against his States. Schill, with a Prussian cavalry regiment, endeavored to seize Magdeburg, and failing there moved north in hopes of British assistance. His raid was ended finally by Napoleon's troops in Holland and North Germany, who closed in on him at Stralsund, and cut to pieces his brave troops (31 May). Schill himself was killed, and most of the survivors were sent to the galleys in France.

In June, the Duke of Brunswick, in a dashing cavalry raid, sought to rouse Saxony and Westphalia; but he accomplished little beyond exposing the weakness of Jérôme's rule. With his 2000 followers he finally reached the coast and embarked on British cruisers (August).

The Emperor was disgusted with Jérôme's military incapacity, and called him severely to account: "It is necessary," he wrote, "to be a soldier, then a soldier, and still a soldier; you should have neither ministers, nor diplomatic corps, nor pomp. You should bivouac with your advance-guard, be in the saddle night and day, march with the advance-guard to receive information, or remain in your harem. You make war like a satrap. Is it from me, good God! that you have learned that! With an army of 200,000 men, I am at the head of my skirmishers; and I do not permit even Champagny to follow me . . . Cease to be ridiculous; send the diplomatic corps back to Cassel; have no baggage, no train, no table except your own. Make war like a young soldier who has need of glory and renown: endeavor to merit the rank to which you have mounted, the esteem of France and of Europe whose eyes are on you; and, good God! have sufficient intelligence to write and talk in a proper manner."

When the Emperor learned that, during the Brunswick raid, Jérôme had not left Cassel, it was too much. By an order from

Vienna (11 August) he relieved his brother of all active command, and placed under Junot all of the French troops in South Germany.

Thus, in the autumn of 1809, Jérôme, by his method of government, had made all Germany a hotbed of revolt against the Empire. He had turned against France the universities and the younger element, which had previously been friendly. By his manner of making war he had done even more than the reverse at Essling to impair confidence in the Imperial arms. He had made himself contemptible in the eyes of all Europe, and dimmed the glory of the Emperor.

After taking the waters at Barèges, Murat went to Cauterets for another course of treatment, and did not reach Paris until the 4 August 1808. Upon the return of the Emperor, ten days later, he immediately gave orders for his brother-in-law to set out for Naples, writing him (18 August): "It will give me pleasure to see you depart as soon as possible." With some difficulty Murat obtained permission to remain until after the ball at the Hôtel-de-Ville, on the 21 August. The following day he took his departure, and Caroline followed him two weeks later.

On the 6 September, accompanied only by his aide de camp, La Vauguyon, Murat made his entry into his capital. He was on horseback, attired in his usual military costume, with no insignia of royalty. At an arch of triumph, erected in his honor, he received the homage of his subjects, and then attended a *Te Deum* at the cathedral.

At the début of his reign, Murat found himself in a very embarrassing situation: the royal guard had followed Joseph; all the regular troops were in Spain; the treasury was empty; the ministers had accompanied Joseph, or were preparing to rejoin him. The only one who remained was Salicetti, whose daughter had married the Duc de Lavello; but Murat hesitated to place any confidence in this Corsican, who had so long been attached to the Bonapartes. He found a few old comrades-in-arms among the French officers, but for civil affairs he was thrown

almost entirely on his own resources. The former agents of Joseph tried to take advantage of his inexperience in matters of finance and administration, but they took him for more of a fool than he was: his good sense as a soldier, and his Gascon finesse, helped him to see through their plots. "I am not a great financier," he said; . . . "for my part, I know only one thing, that is, that I shall never order an expense unless the money is on hand to meet it."

Murat also found himself short of funds to meet his personal expenses. Joseph had drawn his allowances from the Civil List up to the first of August, and on that date the Emperor had cut off all of Murat's emoluments, as grand-admiral, marshal, senator, grand cordon, and commander-in-chief. He had nothing more to expect from the revenues of Berg, or from his French estates, all of which had been taken over by the Emperor.

The only consolation which Murat could find was in the decree of the Emperor, naming, *Joachim-Napoleon, by the grace of God and by the constitution of the State, King of the Two-Sicilies, grand-admiral of the Empire.* "The crown which Your Majesty has just given me," he wrote the Emperor, "is without doubt a great benefit; but you will allow me to place first what you have accorded me in permitting me to bear your name. . . . Your Majesty will never have occasion to regret having allied me to your family." As grand-duke, Murat had never received this name: as king, he was thus admitted into the Imperial family, and joined to the dynasty.

Murat's first task was to reconstitute the army, which had been disorganized by the troops sent to Spain, and to have a military force worthy of his command. Acts of clemency seemed to him the best means of recruiting his troops. He accordingly issued an amnesty to all deserters, pardons to hundreds who were condemned to death, grace to the émigrés and restitution of their goods. He also gave his attention to the rations of the soldiers; provided for the payment of the arrears in the military pensions; and created several new regiments of the Guard. He held daily parades, and frequent reviews. Un-

der his personal command, Capri was attacked and taken — a fine feat of arms!

All of the acts of Murat were severely criticized by the Emperor, who showed a certain spirit of jealousy — particularly regarding Capri. This event had been announced in a despatch to the Minister of Foreign Affairs. "That is ridiculous," Napoleon wrote Murat; "Capri having been taken by my troops, I should learn of this event by my Minister of War, to whom you should render a report. You should take care to do nothing to wound me or the French Army." But this was nothing in comparison with the wrath of the Emperor over Murat's acts of clemency, which he disapproved entirely, and ordered recalled. The Emperor was particularly displeased over some edicts of the new King which seemed to reflect on the policy of his predecessor, to whom, Napoleon said, Murat owed an "eternal gratitude." Under all the circumstances, *reconnaissance éternelle* was rather strong, and Murat may well have felt himself aggrieved.

In view of the brief experience of Murat as an administrator, and his lack of competent advisers, it would seem that Napoleon, whose patience with his brothers had practically no limits, might have shown a little more leniency in dealing with his brother-in-law. But, as a matter of fact, Murat's acts at Naples were only a pretext, and not the real reason for the Emperor's severity.

During the Campaign of Poland, in 1807, the possibility of Napoleon's death, and its effect on the dynasty, were seriously discussed at Paris. The constant presence of the Emperor on the field of battle rendered a sudden vacancy of the throne of France not improbable. The order of succession, established by the constitution, did not offer any chance for Murat, but the fertile brain of his ambitious wife suggested other means of arriving at this end. In her palace of the Élysée, which she owed to the generosity of her brother, she elaborated a plan exactly similar to that of Malet, which came so near to success five years later. In order to be ready for the eventuality of the

Emperor's death, she imagined, like the celebrated conspirator, that it was essential to have the governor of Paris in her interests. Caroline therefore undertook the easy task of seducing General Junot, who then held that important post. She succeeded perfectly in this attempt, which was less difficult than dangerous on the part of a woman who was young and pretty. Junot, who was hardly thirty-six years of age, saw in this liaison only a victory of his personal charms. He was far from suspecting the ulterior motives of his mistress. With his fanatical devotion to the Emperor, he would never have knowingly become a party to any such conspiracy. Caroline, realizing this fact, laid her plans in such a way that, "the day, the moment arrived, Junot could refuse her nothing."[8] In order to draw her lover closer into her net, Caroline did not hesitate publicly to parade her relations with the governor of Paris: "It was not unusual to see at unconventional hours the carriage and the livery of Junot in the court of the Élysée."[9]

The affair was so little a secret that it reached the ears of the Empress. Girardin records, after a conversation with Joséphine, that, "he had heard spoken of, the intimacy which existed between Caroline and Junot"; and adds, "Matters were so arranged that Murat, in case the Emperor were killed, would be his successor."[10]

But Caroline did not base her calculations entirely on the governor of Paris. In order to gain the support of some of the Great Powers, at the critical hour, she was very attentive to the diplomatic corps, and particularly to Metternich, who fell entirely under the influence of her charms: "He seemed much attached to Madame Murat," writes Madame de Rémusat, "and retained a feeling for her which for a long time maintained her husband on the throne of Naples."[11]

Upon his return from Tilsit, Napoleon soon heard of the little romance of his sister and Junot. At the moment, he paid

[8] Abrantès, 6 *Mémoires,* 405.
[9] 7 *Ibid,* 129.
[10] Girardin, 2 *Souvenirs,* 319.
[11] Rémusat, 3 *Mémoires,* 48. *Cf.* Avrillon, 1 *Mémoires,* 353; Fouché, 2 *Mémoires,* 181.

no attention to the political side of the intrigue, but he made up his mind to separate the two lovers at once. He accordingly gave Junot the command of the Army of Observation upon the Gironde. Junot, feeling that he was being sent into exile, protested strongly. The Emperor explained that it was advisable for him to leave Paris for a time, in order to put an end to the reports about him and Caroline. "You will have at Lisbon an authority without limits," said the Emperor. . . . "Come! my old friend, the bâton of marshal is there." [12]

Junot departed; he acquired glory and riches; he won the title of Duc d'Abrantès; but he never received the coveted bâton of marshal of France. Caroline was forgiven, of course; the Emperor wished to appear ignorant of the little conspiracy. The following year, he gave Murat the throne of Naples, and thus was realized the ardent wish of his sister to be a queen.

This elevation of Caroline to a regal throne, however, by no means put an end to her intrigues for the Imperial succession. This time, Talleyrand and Fouché were brought into the plot. Fouché had owed his first dismissal from the ministry to Talleyrand, and for many years the two men had been declared enemies. Suddenly, Talleyrand appeared in the salon of Fouché, and the latter was present at the receptions of the vice-grand-électeur: they were seen walking arm-in-arm, and, after a rupture of many years, appeared to be on most cordial terms.

In his *Souvenirs,* Girardin gives a report of a conversation which he had with the Empress, the last of February 1809, after his return from Spain. Joséphine said to him:

"While you were in Spain, there were some curious rapprochements; implacable enemies have suddenly become reconciled; men who never met have been seen together frequently. . . . When Murat was given the throne of Naples, all of the journals under the control of the police sang his praises. . . . Fouché said openly that Murat was the only successor of the Emperor, the only one who could inspire Europe with fear, and the only one who enjoyed the confidence of the Army. He

[12] Abrantès, 7 *Mémoires,* 175.

wrote a letter to the Emperor in which he stated positively that France did not want any of his brothers as a successor. Fortunately the eyes of Bonaparte are opened since his return. The letter of which I speak is in the hands of his secretary [Méneval]."

It was at the time of which the Empress speaks, while Napoleon was still in Spain, that Murat was advised to have relays of horses arranged from Naples to Paris, so as to lose no time when he was called.[13] Eugène intercepted the letter, or the messenger, and notified Lavalette, who transmitted the report to the Emperor in Spain. This was one of the principal reasons for Napoleon's precipitate return to Paris in January 1809. He called Talleyrand severely to account; but took no action in the cases of Fouché and Caroline.[14]

Finally the wrath of the Emperor seemed to evaporate, and there was an entire change in his attitude. The war with Austria was about to begin, and he had need of the services of Murat. The King was ordered to send a division to Rome, to relieve the French troops who were to rejoin Eugène. Later (5 April) he was directed to advance to the frontier of Rome, and be prepared to take possession of the city: " the Pope will remain a bishop, but will no longer take part in temporal affairs." On the 17 May, the order came, to take possession, in the name of France, of the Papal States. The King was to go in person to Rome, where he would assume the general command; he was to despatch all the French troops to Northern Italy, and garrison the city with his Neapolitans.

Murat had not had time to carry out the Emperor's orders before he was recalled to Naples by a descent of the English upon the coast of Calabria. In this emergency he showed his merits as a soldier, and the English were soon forced to find refuge in Sicily.

The English expedition against Naples had really been no

[13] See 1 Pasquier, 353–360.

[14] See *Napoleon and Josephine,* 275–280; *Napoleon and Marie-Louise,* 99–100.

more serious than the descent on Walcheren, or the raids of Schill and Brunswick, but it had given Europe a chance to draw a comparison between the brother-in-law and the brothers of the Emperor. Murat was a hero in the eyes of his people, and his popularity was unbounded.

Napoleon, however, affected to believe that it was his victory of Wagram which had averted the danger; and he sent no felicitations to Murat. On the contrary, he resumed his tone of fault-finding. He also took the domains which he had erected into duchies, and of which Joseph had always enjoyed the revenues, and conferred them on Fouché (Otrante), Macdonald (Tarante), Oudinot (Reggio), and Gaudin (Gaète).

As the Emperor reviewed the situation, he had every reason to be satisfied with the record of Eugène, whom he had made his viceroy in Italy, after the throne had been refused by all his brothers. As administrator, in less than four years, Eugène had transformed the kingdom, welding into a harmonious unit the twenty different States over which he ruled. In his relations with the Papacy, and in the enforcement of the Continental System, he had showed much tact, and lightened so far as possible the rigors of the Emperor's policy.

He was not surprised by the outbreak of hostilities with Austria, as he had kept the Emperor informed of the military preparations of that Power. That he was not better prepared for war, with all of his best troops in Spain, was not his fault, but that of the Emperor. He was therefore forced in the beginning to retire behind the Adige, where he received the reenforcements from Rome, and was joined by Macdonald, whom he had asked the Emperor to send him. With the outbreak of the insurrection in the Tyrol, the situation seemed grave, but it was soon relieved by the Emperor's victories in Austria. The Archduke John was recalled; Eugène was joined by Marmont, with his army corps from Dalmatia, and they marched together to unite with the Grand Army on the Danube.

In the Thirteenth Bulletin, the Emperor warmly expressed his satisfaction: " In this whole campaign the Viceroy has dis-

played a coolness, and a quickness in seizing the main point, which presage a great captain." He also welcomed the arrival of the Army of Italy in a glorious proclamation: "This Austrian Army of Italy, which, for a moment, defiled my provinces; which had the pretentions to break my Iron Crown, — dispersed, beaten, overwhelmed, thanks to you, — will be an example of the truth of the device: *Dio me la diede, guaï a chi la tocca!*"[15]

The arrival of Eugène, immediately after the battle of Essling, was most opportune, but this did not end his task. The Archduke John, with the remnants of his army, was endeavoring to rejoin the Archduke Charles in the Marchfeld, and Eugène was sent to hold him back. This task the Viceroy successfully accomplished in the battle of Raab, on the 14 June, the anniversary of two of Napoleon's greatest victories. "My son," the Emperor wrote him, "I congratulate you on the battle of Raab; it is a granddaughter of Marengo and of Friedland."

Returning in time for the passage of the Danube, Eugène took part in the battle of Wagram; but the Emperor hardly mentioned his name in the Twenty-fifth Bulletin, in which he exalted Macdonald, to whom he gave the bâton of marshal. After the armistice of Znaim, however, the Emperor showed his continued confidence in Eugène by giving him (17 July) the command of that part of Hungary occupied by his army; and later by sending him on a grand tour of inspection, during which he advised him to visit and study the field of Austerlitz.

Returning to Vienna, Eugène lived with the Emperor at Schönbrunn on terms of the greatest intimacy, taking part in the daily parades, and seeming to enjoy a favor which excited no envy, for he was universally popular in the army. He never put on any airs, and in private continued the familiar *tutoiement* with many of his old comrades. At this time, for instance, he wrote Bessières, who was recalled to France: "Do not forget us in the midst of the distractions of Paris, and think, I pray thee, that thou hast left at Vienna, in Duroc and myself,

[15] "God gave it me, woe to him who touches it!"

two old and sincere friends." It would be difficult to say, from what atavism, so different from his father, Alexandre de Beauharnais, Eugène derived that serenity in good fortune, that absence of self-assertion, that simplicity, which placed him in a class by himself.

CHAPTER TWENTY-FOUR

OCTOBER 1806 — NOVEMBER 1809

MADAME AND HER DAUGHTERS

MADAME — Her Life at Paris — Her Frugality — Her Bust by Canova — ELISA — She Is Given Tuscany — Her Letter to Napoleon — Their Disagreements — PAULINE — Her Health — Her Sojourn at Gréoux — Her Letter to Forbin — Their Rupture — Her Winter at Nice — Affair with Blangini — She Is Sent to Turin with Borghèse — Her Schemes to Go to Aix — She Wins Joseph's Consent — Her Return to Paris — Her Statue by Canova — CAROLINE — Her Intrigues at Naples — Failure to Gain La Vauguyon and Maghella — Her Portrait — JULIE — Her Retired Life in France — HORTENSE — Her Jewels — Her Romance with Flahaut — His Letters — She Is Spied on by Decazes — Her Visits to Strasbourg and Plombières — CATHERINE — Her Stay at Strasbourg — Her Happy Married Life.

MADAME passed the summer of 1806 quietly at her château of Pont, and did not return to Paris until October, after the departure of the Emperor for the Prussian campaign. Then, with the advice of her brother, who loaned her some paintings, she redecorated and refurnished the Hôtel de Brienne, which she had purchased from Lucien. She went occasionally to the theatre, where the Imperial boxes were always at her disposal; but most of her evenings were passed in the dimly lighted salon of her mansion, where she played *reversis* [1] with her ladies, Fesch, and several priests of the Grand-Almoner. According to Madame d'Abrantès, who was one of her ladies of honor, she had a singular defect in her right hand, which was very marked when she was playing cards: a clumsily-performed operation, which had destroyed the nerve, made it impossible for her to bend the forefinger. Except for this defect, her hands were very small and perfectly formed.[2]

[1] A kind of card game, in which the one who took the fewest tricks gained the most.

[2] Abrantès, 6 *Mémoires*, 174 *et seq.*

The filial piety of Napoleon was shown in the honors bestowed upon his mother, whose manners and language were little in accord with her high station. According to Lucien, she spoke neither Italian nor French well.[3] Relating a conversation which he had with her in 1809, Girardin has given us a specimen of her manner of speech. For l'Empereur, she said *l'Emperour;* je and de, she pronounced *jou* and *dou;* manger was *mangiare,* and honneur was *honour.*[4]

Napoleon displayed at all times the greatest tenderness for his mother. Their only discord was over the inveterate economy of Madame, which he could never overcome. He could not hide his smile, when, in their discussions, she said: "If you all come back on my hands some day, you will thank me for what I am doing to-day."[5]

There is no reason to think, however, that these precautions came from any doubt as to the solidity of the Imperial edifice. Madame could never forget the privations and the sufferings of her earlier life, and she well knew that, in this world, misfortunes are always possible. Her maternal heart had not forgotten the agony of being driven from her burning home, of wandering along the coast of Corsica with her five children, of her arrival without a sou at Marseille, where she lived for a time on public charity. With her inborn tendency to economy, one can understand her frugality, which was really only an instinctive act of foresightedness; and no one will contest the title that Napoleon gave her, of a *worthy woman.*

At the end of January, the Empress returned from Mayence, and Madame began to lay her plans to go to Pont in April. In reply to her letter, the Emperor wrote from Finckenstein, where he had taken up his quarters on the first of April:

"Madame, I strongly approve of your going to your country place, but, so long as you are at Paris, it is proper for you to attend the family dinner every Sunday at the home of the Empress. My family is a public family. In my absence, the Em-

[3] Jung, 2 *Mémoires de Lucien Bonaparte,* 294.
[4] Girardin, 2 *Journal et Souvenirs,* 327.
[5] 1 Metternich, 310.

press is always the head. Besides, this is an honor which I accord to the members of my family. . . ."

This was a severe admonition to Madame, who cordially disliked the Empress, and who, like Julie, absented herself from the family dinners as often as she dared. But the departure of Joséphine for Malmaison, and a little later for Brussels, absolved her of this disagreeable duty. She therefore stayed at Paris, and continued to lead the same retired life, occupied only with the investment of her funds, and her correspondence with the absent members of her family.

After the return of the Emperor from Tilsit (27 July), she attended the *Te Deum* at Notre-Dame on his fête-day (15 August), and was present at the marriage of Jérôme a week later. In September, she followed the Court to Fontainebleau, where she remained until the 9 November. A few days before she left, she obtained the Emperor's promise to increase her allowance to a million francs, to date from the first of January following.

But Madame could never persuade the Emperor to give her the political prominence which, strangely enough, she always coveted. At the Salon of 1808, she exhibited her bust, which Canova had just finished. After the close of the Salon, she sent for the architect of the Tuileries, and asked him to place her bust in the interior of the palace, in a position where it would be " as much as possible under the eyes of the Emperor." She suggested the Salon of the Emperor, or, better still, the Throne Room, opposite the throne. There, in marble, if not in flesh, she would find her rank recognized. Much to her disappointment, the Emperor refused his consent.

In short, Madame had her great and solid qualities, mingled with others which were small, and almost ludicrous. Unlike her sons and daughters, she never ran in debt, and invested every year at least half of her income, which was greater than any one realized, except perhaps her brother. But she was always ready to succor any member of her family who was in want; and, from 1807 on, she gave large sums to Lucien.

At Venice, in December 1807, Élisa had been disappointed in her hope of securing Tuscany; and there seemed little probability that her ambition would ever be gratified, when the Emperor sent from Bayonne to Paris, the following May, a plan for uniting Parma, Plaisance, and Tuscany to the Empire. But Napoleon never carried out this project, in its original form; and on the 2 March 1807, by a decree of the Senate, Tuscany was erected into a grand-duchy. The following day, the Emperor conferred on " his sister the Princesse Élisa . . . the departments of Tuscany, with the title of grande-duchesse." The powers given her were almost exactly the same as those of the archduchesses who had formerly ruled over the Netherlands during the period of the Austrian sovereignty. In Piombino, her husband was at least associated in the principality; at Lucca, if she alone governed, Félix reigned; but in Tuscany, she alone bore the title, and exercised all the powers, with no participation on the part of her husband. Nevertheless, Tuscany was a part of the French Empire, and no woman had ever ruled in France, where the Salic law had always been in force. Moreover, the husband was subordinated to the wife: it was Élisa who would transmit the orders of the Emperor, and of the Minister of War, to Prince Félix, " promoted Imperial Highness, major-general, and named commander-in chief." [6]

As she was to be merely the representative of her brother's will in Tuscany, Élisa really gained little beyond the satisfaction of her vanity in the possession of a high-sounding title. Nevertheless, her delight was great, as is shown by her effusive letter to the Emperor:

Sire, I owe everything to you; and I shall be happy if, through my boundless devotion, my earnest zeal in following implicitly your orders and your intentions for the happiness of your people of Tuscany, I may justify the high confidence with which you have honored me.

Permit me, Sire, to be the interpreter of the feelings of the Prince. He has gone to pass several days at Piombino. I have

[6] 4 Masson, 458.

informed him by a courier of the kind dispositions of Your Majesty regarding him. You will be satisfied with his zeal, I guarantee. The military career has always pleased him, and he would have desired to sacrifice his life in fighting for Your Majesty.

I recommend myself to the high protection of Your Majesty, and I remain, Sire, with the greatest respect, of Your Imperial and Royal Majesty, the most devoted and submissive sister,

ÉLISA

But Élisa soon found that all initiative was denied her, and her haughty nature chafed under the restrictions imposed upon her. She was unable to take any step, even of the smallest importance, without the approval of the Emperor, or of one of his ministers; and she was forbidden to countermand, or even suspend, the execution of any order received from Paris. Her refusal to allow the execution of an order received from Fouché brought a scathing reprimand from the Emperor:

You have the right to appeal to me against the decisions of my ministers, but you have no right to suspend in any way their execution. The ministers speak in my name; . . . there is no authority in France superior to that of a minister. . . . Even when my minister may happen to be in the wrong, I alone am the judge, and you have no right to place any obstacle in his way. You are a subject, like all the French, and you are obliged to obey the orders of the ministers; for, an order of arrest, signed by the Minister of Police, would be quite sufficient to have you arrested, and not only you, but the first Prince of the Blood.

Élisa promised obedience, but in less than a month she began again, by writing the Emperor direct, regarding some appointments to be made in Tuscany. Clear in her plans, vigorous in executing them, it was as difficult for Élisa to submit to any control as it was for her imperious brother. Even Napoleon was forced to admit that she ruled firmly, and that all was tranquil in Tuscany.

At this time she was again enceinte, and Cenami, whom she

sent to Paris, regarding the limits of Lucca, bore the good news — "receiving congratulations, as also Bacciochi."[7]

Pauline passed the autumn of 1806 and the following winter in Paris. Although her health was still delicate, she gave several large entertainments at the Hôtel Charost, and was present at many of the dinners and balls of the season. Her toilettes were magnificent, and excited much admiration and envy. She well deserved the title which the Emperor gave her of *la reine des colifichets*.

In the spring, she made her plans to go to a watering-place in Provence, while she had constructed on the garden side of her hôtel some galleries in which she proposed to install the famous Borghèse works of art. The Emperor, who suspected some ulterior motive, found her request strange, and at first refused his permission. But Pauline insisted, claiming that her health, and even her life, depended upon it. The middle of April, she went to Saint-Leu, to await the Emperor's reply from Poland.

Pauline was really ill at this time, suffering from "an hysterical affection," the cause of which is set forth at considerable length, and with medical candor, in a letter from the celebrated Dr. Hallé, to Pauline's regular physician, Peyre, who had called him in consultation.[8]

Her health, however, was only a pretext, and the real reason for her desire to leave Paris was the fear that her intimacy with Forbin was in danger of becoming known to her mother, and through her to the Emperor. Napoleon finally gave a somewhat reluctant consent; and, about the middle of May, Pauline set out for the South, leaving her lover in Paris. At Lyon, where she was the guest of Fesch, her arrival had been preceded by a letter from her mother, in which Madame said that she was worried over Pauline's position "in several ways." This letter aroused Fesch's suspicions; and when Pauline de-

[7] 4 Masson, 465.

[8] This letter, under date of 20 April 1807, is published by Arthur Lévy (*Napoléon intime*, 317–319), and is also quoted by Turquan (*Les Sœurs de Napoléon*, 222–223).

parted, after a visit of three days, her uncle insisted upon one of his chaplains, Isoard by name, accompanying her in the capacity of spiritual director, as she had not brought her almoner with her. This precaution, however, proved useless, as the worthy Isoard was soon completely under the influence of the fascinating Pauline.

On reaching Aix-les-Bains, the princess persuaded her chamberlain, M. de Montbreton, and her lady of honor, Mme. de Bréhan, of whose fidelity she was suspicious, to remain there and take a course of baths, while she, accompanied only by one lady attendant, and her devoted servants, proceeded to Gréoux, a small village in the Basses-Alpes, whose waters were reputed to be sovereign for the treatment of rheumatism and scrofula.

Here, freed from the surveillance of her suite, she looked forward impatiently to an early reunion with Forbin. In the meantime she consoled herself by addressing to him the most fervent epistles, which bore a striking resemblance to the letters which she had once written to Fréron, even to the passionate postscripts in Italian. Here is a specimen:

GRÉOUX, 10 June, 1 P.M.

Well-beloved, no letters from thee this morning. I am very anxious to receive them since, in thy last, thou didst say that thou wast suffering from an attack of fever. I trust that it will be nothing serious, and that my A . . . [*Auguste*] will soon be quite well. . . .

Ah! Art thou not my spouse? Has mine deserved this title, so sweet, so sacred? No; he has not deserved it, for otherwise you would not be mine. . . .

I am more than ever of the opinion that all about us should be fully persuaded that everything is over between us, that we may be at ease. The doctor [*Peyre*] has quite decided to play the very devil, and to take himself off. It is he who has revealed everything to M. Ha . . . [*Hallé*], not from malice, but from fear and foolishness. Mama, my uncle, know everything, for thou hast no idea what I suffered at Lyon, and the tears that I shed on learning that we were discovered. . . . In order to impose on every one, the greatest care is necessary;

sacrifices must be made, privations must be endured, if thou dost wish to keep me. I will write and tell thee the way in which thou art to behave. . . .

Adieu, adieu. I am going to try and get a little repose, for I have never written at such length, but thou knowest well that for thee I do the impossible, and for thee alone. . . .

And she ends this long letter, which we have quoted only in part, with two burning sentences in Italian, which recall her letters to Fréron.[9]

Forbin duly arrived, and Pauline found his society so entrancing that she remained at Gréoux until the late autumn. Not even the fête of the Emperor, or the marriage of her brother Jérôme, or the visit of the Court to Fontainebleau was able to draw her from her retreat. " I am still in my desert," she writes Lucien, in September, " separated from all the world, and occupied entirely with the care of my health."[10]

Late in the autumn, Pauline left for Nice, but soon departed for Grasse, passing several days on her way at the country home of Forbin's mother. Finding Grasse very dull, she announced her return to Nice. This sudden change in her plans seems to have been due to the final rupture of her liaison with Forbin. The eyes of the Emperor appear to have been opened, for Forbin was given a position in the army, and despatched to join Junot in Portugal.

At Nice, the princess installed herself in a charming villa, with a large garden which sloped gently down to the sea. Guards were posted along the shore, for fear that one of the British cruisers might send in boats and carry off the Emperor's sister.

[9] Her letter is published in full by M. Masson. (4 Masson, 431–435.)

[10] Several of Pauline's historians, evidently misled by Mme. de Rémusat, state erroneously that she was present at Fontainebleau. (See 3 Rémusat, 228.) Her correspondence, however, proves that at this time she was at Gréoux. It is well known that the Rémusat destroyed her original manuscript during the Hundred Days, and subsequently rewrote it from memory. Her recollection of the fêtes at Fontainebleau was certainly at fault in this instance. (*Cf.* 4 Masson, 436.)

After a few weeks, Pauline became very tired of her surroundings, and wrote Napoleon, who was in Italy, to ask permission to join him at Turin. The Emperor replied that the weather was too cold, and the roads in too bad a condition, for her to travel, in her delicate state of health. He advised her to remain at Nice until spring, when he hoped to see her in Paris.

To pass away the tedious hours, the princess decided to resume her singing-lessons, and thought of a young Italian composer, named Blangini, who had been her teacher in Paris. Blangini accordingly was summoned, and arrived at Nice a few weeks later in a luxurious coach which Pauline had sent to transport him to the coast.

With the arrival of the young Italian, Pauline's ennui quickly disappeared. He sang duets with her, escorted her to places of interest in the neighborhood, played to her " when the moon shed its silvery waves over the blue waters of the Mediterranean," and even discussed musical, or other, matters with her long after the rest of her household were wrapped in slumber.

But Pauline's new romance was soon interrupted by her unfeeling brother. On the second of February 1808, a decree of the Senate erected the Government-Generalship of the Departments beyond the Alps into a great dignity of the Empire, the seat of which was to be at Turin. A fortnight later, the Emperor appointed his brother-in-law Camillo Borghèse as Governor-General, and announced to Pauline that she must accompany her husband to Turin.

In deciding upon this measure, the Emperor had had two objects in view: in the first place, to satisfy his good people of Turin, whose prosperity had declined since the expulsion of the House of Savoy; in the second place, to put an end to the continued separation of the Prince and Princess Borghèse, and the amours of his sister, which were becoming a public scandal.

The Emperor fixed their revenues, their manner of life, the etiquette which they were to observe, and the residences which they were to occupy. There were to be no more separate establishments: they were to live together in that part of the royal palace known as the Palais Chablais; they were also to

have the use of the other residences formerly belonging to the King of Sardinia, including the hunting-lodge at Stupinigi. Borghèse was to receive a large salary, amounting, with extra allowances, to nearly 900,000 francs; and Pauline's allowance was increased to 480,000 francs.[11]

Borghèse joined Pauline at Nice about the middle of April, and they set out for Turin a few days later. The Emperor had not given Blangini any post in Pauline's new household, but she was somewhat consoled by his promise to accompany her in a private capacity. The roads over the mountains were in very bad order, after the winter's storms, and the journey was a very trying one. They finally reached Turin, where they had a very enthusiastic welcome from the people. The city offered Their Imperial Highnesses a superb fête at the Opera-House, which they returned in a series of balls, dinners, and suppers. Pauline, who could be tactful when she wished to be, won much popularity by ordering Italian music played at her entertainments, saying that it was much more charming than the French.

But the princess soon found the routine of official duties very tiresome, and at the end of a week, on the plea of ill-health, she took her departure for the hunting-lodge at Stupinigi, where she was joined by her Italian favorite. Much to Pauline's grief, however, Blangini declined to remain, and set out for Paris. The marked partiality shown for him by the princess had excited the jealousy of some of his compatriots in Pauline's suite, and he was afraid of their enmity.

Deprived of the society of her new lover, of whom she had not yet had time to grow tired, Pauline found the climate of Italy insupportable, and wrote the Emperor to ask permission to go to a watering-place in France, in order to regain her health. Napoleon replied from Bayonne: "I am willing for you to go to the waters of the Valley of Aosta. I am grieved to hear that your health is bad. I presume that you are pru-

[11] About this same time, the Emperor purchased for eighteen million francs, and placed in the Louvre, the magnificent Borghèse collection, for which the prince had previously declined an offer of one million pounds sterling from the British Government. The purchase by the Emperor was accepted by Borghèse with the worst possible grace.

dent, and that it is in no way your own fault." And in conclusion he recommends her to "make herself beloved, to be affable to every one, to preserve an even temper, and to make the prince happy."

But Pauline had no more intention of going to the waters of Aosta than she had of trying to make the prince happy. She was determined to go to Aix-les-Bains, and eventually to Paris. To accomplish her purpose, she refused all nourishment, declaring that she could not digest even the lightest broth; and she had convulsions and fainting fits in the middle of the night. While these performances were going on, the 30 May Joseph arrived in Turin, on his way to join the Emperor at Bayonne. Pauline had no difficulty in arousing the sympathy of her kind-hearted brother, who wrote Napoleon:

I have found Paulette here in a deplorable state of health. She has eaten nothing for a week, and is unable to take even the lightest broth. The doctors have told me that she ought to leave as soon as possible the damp air of Turin and go to the baths at Aix-en-Savoie. Her husband was hesitating, because he had not yet received Your Majesty's reply to the permission he had requested for this journey; but I did not hesitate a moment to tell him to send his wife away, and that I would answer for it to Your Majesty, who desired before all things to save his sister's life.

Before this letter could reach Bayonne, Napoleon, who was not so easily duped as his brother, wrote Pauline, on the 2 June:

Your trouble is a necessary consequence of the spring. Stupinigi is somewhat damp; Turin is preferable. I do not see why you do not go to the waters of Lucca. I see no objection to your going to the waters of Saint-Didier, but you must not leave the Government without my order.

When this letter came, Pauline had flown: on the 5 June she arrived at Chambéry, and the following day at Aix. So far, her little plot had worked out very well; but it now remained to arrange not to return to Turin. By every courier to Paris, the news of her illness became more and more alarming: Paulette was dying, Paulette was dead! On the first of July,

her mother, accompanied by Fesch, left Paris, and travelled night and day, fearing to arrive too late. From The Hague, Louis wrote his friend Lavalette, to express his grief, and demand the latest bulletins of his dear sister's health.

It is doubtful whether Madame and Fesch, on their arrival, were taken in by Pauline's pretended illness. At any rate, Madame, in a letter to Lucien on the 6 July, simply said: "Paulette, with whom the climate of Turin does not agree, is more ill than usual." On the 12th, while her mother returned by land to Lyon, Pauline embarked on Lake Bourget to reach the same place by way of the Rhône. Hardly arresting her journey at her uncle's palace in Lyon, she pushed on to Paris. The last word of this comedy is given in a letter from her dear sister Élisa to Lucien: "Paulette has made fools of us all; I said that she was fooling the Emperor, for her illness is nothing else than the desire to go to Paris."

The Emperor, however, accepted the situation, and gave Pauline permission to take up her quarters in the Hôtel Charost; but later directed her to go to the château of Villiers, which he had just acquired from the Murats. Her husband, who was convinced that she had deceived him, refused to send her any money, and she was forced to borrow forty thousand francs from the banker Laffitte to keep her going until the Emperor's return to Paris.

When Napoleon reached Paris, Pauline persuaded him to give his consent to her residing permanently at Paris. He also gave her the use of the château of Neuilly, which he had taken over from Caroline, and increased her allowance to 600,000 francs, to date from the first of January 1809. But this was not all. During the winter, Pauline adopted the policy of Caroline, and devoted herself so entirely to entertaining the Emperor, that in March she found her income increased to 1,300,000 francs: "In which dispositions, His Majesty desired her to see a proof of the affection which he bore her."

It was at this time that Pauline had made her celebrated statue by Canova. This is the story as told by Mme. d'Abran-

tès: "The Princesse Borghèse was a graceful nymph. Her statue, made by Canova, and *which was moulded upon her,* shows us a ravishing creature. It has been pretended that the artist corrected some defects in her legs and in her bust. I can say that *I have seen* the legs of the Princesse Borghèse, like every one who knew her somewhat intimately, and that I never perceived any defects in them." [12]

And Constant tells us that Pauline, like all the Bonapartes, had no sense of modesty. She received visits, even those of men, while she was in her bath. She was so proud of her beautiful figure that she did not wish to deprive her friends of the privilege of seeing and admiring it.[13]

Caroline arrived at Naples with the expectation that she "would be admitted officially to the government like Caroline of Austria": in other words, that she was to rule, like her sister Élisa, while her husband reigned. Had not the Emperor said to Murat that, "with a wife like his, he could absent himself, she being well fitted to be at the head of a regency"? But Murat had no idea of playing the rôle of a prince-consort, and he did not propose to give Caroline any part in the government.

At Paris, Caroline had had two liaisons,[14] into which ambition entered more than love. Her intimate relations with Talleyrand, Fouché, and Maret, however, seem to have been entirely platonic and political. Barred from any active part in the government at Naples, she began to intrigue against her husband, as she had done at Paris against her brother. She first cast her eyes on M. de La Vauguyon. Paul de La Vauguyon, who was then thirty years of age, had emigrated during the Revolution, served in Spain with the corps of Saint-Simon, and not returned to France until after the founding of the Empire. He then entered the Army; after Austerlitz he became an aide de camp of Murat; was promoted in two years to the rank of major, and was Murat's only companion when

[12] Abrantès, 6 *Mémoires,* 67.
[13] Constant, 2 *Mémoires,* 285.
[14] With Junot and Metternich.

PAULINE BONAPARTE

he entered Naples. He was a handsome man — tall, slender, well-built, with the bearing and manners of the Court of Versailles, but he was absolutely devoid of intelligence.

Finding that she was not making much progress with La Vauguyon, who had been promoted by Murat to brigadier-general, and made one of the two colonel-generals of his Guard, Caroline turned her batteries on Daure. Physically, this man was not very attractive, being short and thickly-built, but he was extremely intelligent. Holding the two portfolios of War and the Navy, he was an important personage.

Caroline also tried to attach to her interests the Corsican, Salicetti, whom she had known since a child; but Salicetti was suspicious, and refused her advances, not caring to become involved in her intrigues.

At this time, Salicetti held the portfolio of minister of police, and his prefect was an old protégé, by the name of Maghella, a native of Genoa. This prefect, who always kept himself in the background, was to play the principal rôle at Naples during the reign of Murat. There is little doubt that he was from the first — as he certainly was later — a member of the Carbonari.[15] He set himself up in opposition to Caroline, either because she represented the French party, or in order to gain the favor of Murat. He spied on the Queen, and reported to Murat that she was having secret conferences with the ministers. From that moment she was kept in seclusion, and allowed to receive her friends only once a week. The French ambassador wrote that she passed her days alone, with her books, her music, and her embroidery.[16]

Napoleon paid no attention to this letter. It is of importance, however, as marking the first appearance on the scene of an anti-French party, with which Caroline was later to ally herself, " under penalty of no longer counting in her kingdom." [17]

This may be a good time to sketch a portrait of this youngest

[15] A secret society formed during the reign of Murat by republicans and others dissatisfied with the French rule.

[16] Letter of the French ambassador to the Minister of Foreign Affairs, " read by the Queen before being sent."

[17] 4 Masson, 470.

sister of the Emperor, whom he had sent to reign at Naples. "Of all the family," writes Mme. d'Abrantès, "the Princess Caroline was perhaps the only one who had not learned to be a princess; her sister Pauline understood the part much better." In fact, Caroline had none of the characteristics of a *grande dame*. She was selfish, cold, calculating — never saying a pleasant word, or doing a kind act, unless there was some personal advantage to be gained. "She had," said Talleyrand, "a head of Cromwell upon the shoulders of a pretty woman." [18] The caustic minister also spoke of "the enormity of Caroline's head, relative to the proportions of her body." [19] Her greatest beauty was her complexion, which was fresh and dazzling; but her eyes were too small; her hair neither brown nor blond; her teeth far from resembling a row of pearls, like those of Pauline, for example. Her shoulders were white, but too high and too round, and she was awkward in her movements. Her hands were good, but lacking in fineness, in distinction, *de comme il faut,* to borrow the words of Mme. d'Abrantès. She was unmoral, rather than immoral. "She talked much of herself, and with too much indulgence: that was doubtless the reason that none remained when she spoke of others." [20] Her education had been very limited, but she was entirely satisfied with her ignorance. She never opened a book; she tried to sing, but, like Napoleon, and all of the Bonapartes, she had no voice, and no ear for music. "If, instead of being the sister of Napoleon, and the wife of Murat, Caroline had been the wife of a simple colonel, no one would have paid any attention to her, except to find her insupportable." [21] In short, she was a woman "whose soul never knew a worthy sentiment."

Julie, for her part, was well satisfied to abandon the throne which Caroline had so long plotted to obtain. After a brief sojourn at Naples, she was glad to return to her quiet life at Mortefontaine, with her daughters, her nieces, her little world.

[18] Méneval, 3 *Mémoires,* 219.
[19] Abrantès, 2 *Mémoires,* 231.
[20] Turquan, 393.
[21] *Ibid,* 394.

For a moment, the Emperor thought of sending her to Spain, but soon gave up the idea. Her winters were spent at the Petit-Luxembourg, her summers at her country estate, with occasional visits to some watering-place — Aix, Vichy, or Plombières. As she received no remittances from Spain, the Emperor gave her the allowance of a million and a half which Joseph had formally renounced when he went to Madrid. From time to time, Joseph invited her to join him, but with little warmth, and she was as reluctant to set out as she had been to go to Naples.

Hortense, also, was content to remain in France with her children. She was independent; and she was rich, with her allowances from the Crown of Holland and the Imperial Treasury, added to the 480,000 francs given her by the Emperor for the maintenance of her household. Every month she laid aside at least ten thousand francs, which she put into diamonds or other precious stones. Unlike Joséphine, she bought no jewelry which was valuable mainly for its mounting, but only precious stones, which could easily be carried, and which would readily sell anywhere for nearly their original cost.

For a long time, Hortense had secretly loved a young officer, who was to be the one great passion of her life. Charles de Flahaut was born in Paris in 1785, the putative son of the aged Charles-François, Comte de Flahaut, and his wife, one of the most charming women of the eighteenth century, who is better remembered under the name of her second husband, M. de Souza. It is an open secret, however, that he was the son of the great Talleyrand.[22]

Hortense always admired the military. She has said: "Of all the homages which a woman can receive, those rendered by the military have always something romantic, with which it is difficult not to be flattered." Romantic is a word which explains her whole character. Therefore there is nothing surprising in the passion, at first platonic and *exaltée*, later not less

[22] It may be remarked, in passing, that the name of Talleyrand was *Charles-Auguste*, and that Flahaut was named *Charles*, while his son by Hortense, the future Duc de Morny, was called *Auguste*.

enthusiastic but more demonstrative, with which she was possessed for a young officer, chivalric beyond all others, and marvellously attractive; who besides could claim his place in the higher aristocracy, not only through his father in the eyes of the law, M. de Flahaut, but also through his real father according to nature, M. de Talleyrand, Prince de Bénévant.[23]

Young Flahaut was an intimate friend of Hortense's brother, Eugène, and since Marengo he had had a brilliant career in the Army. In 1807, he was on the staff of Murat, and the following year on that of Davout. Without his having asked for it, he was called to Paris, and loaded with honors. There he met Hortense at balls and official fêtes. M. Masson, however, is for once at fault, when he states that there was no tie at this time between him and Hortense.[24] This romance had begun at least as early as 1807,[25] as shown by the letters recently published by the Earl of Kerry, which deal with the liaison of Hortense and Flahaut, and with the birth and infancy of their son, Auguste, later known as the Duc de Morny. The Queen of Holland is rarely mentioned by name in the letters of Flahaut to his mother, and then only in the most formal manner, and it was a long time before it was discovered that these letters were full of allusions both to Hortense and to their son. In his earlier letters Hortense first figures as *ma cousine Sophie,* and later becomes *Henriette de Capellis* — a good pseudonym, as Flahaut really had a cousin of that name. His first letters were written from Germany, where he was quartered in 1807–8. One of his earlier letters reads as follows:

STOLPE, 3 December 1807

Many, many messages to *ma chère cousine Sophie* if she is still in Paris. Will *her father* take her back to the *country* this winter or will she spend it in Paris?[26] . . . I really cannot

[23] Boulenger, *Duc de Morny,* 4–5.

[24] See 4 Masson, 474.

[25] See Kerry, *The First Napoleon,* 233 *et seq.*

[26] Louis Bonaparte is evidently intended by "her father," and the "country" is Holland.

write to *Sophie*. I am too fond of her to write in such haste as I am compelled to do at this moment.

In a letter from Anclam (19 January 1808) he writes: "*Sophie's* letters are very kind, but the news that she is enceinte[27] hurts me more than I can say."

In two letters from Burgos, in Spain, dated the 13 and 16 April 1808, he inquires anxiously about the health of his cousin *Henriette*, and wants to know if her *marriage* (confinement) has yet taken place. From the same place, on the 4 May, he writes: "Tell *ma cousine* that I love her with all my heart, and that the note she has sent me has made me very happy."

From Bayonne, on the 21 July 1808, he writes to say that the Prince de Neuchâtel (Berthier) has just taken him as an aide de camp, and adds: "I am proud to hold the post, and to owe it to her to whom I already owe so much."

One letter only is given from Vienna, in September 1809, which shows the jealous interest with which Hortense, at Paris, was kept informed of all his movements.

The Bowood papers are particularly interesting from the fact that they have thrown so much new light on this romance of Hortense, so long shrouded in mystery.

Hortense passed the summer of 1808, after the birth of Louis-Napoleon, at Saint-Leu. At the approach of winter, she returned to Paris, and resided with her mother at the Élysée until the Emperor's return from Spain. All of her movements were promptly reported to Louis, in Holland, by his Paris spies, of whom the chief was Decazes. After the departure of the Emperor for the Austrian war, Decazes committed the imprudence of confiding his reports to the post, and through the famous *Cabinet noir* they soon fell under the eye of Napoleon. The reports were not signed, and for five months the Emperor continued to send one message after another to Fouché, demanding that the Minister of Police should discover the name of the writer, and have him arrested. Fouché knew all the

[27] The reference is to the child born 20 April 1808 — the future Napoleon the Third.

time, but he was a friend of Decazes! Early in October, in some way — perhaps through Lavalette — Napoleon discovered the name, and on the 15th he ordered Decazes sent back to Holland: "Since he is the King's spy, the King should employ him at home."

On the 27 April 1809, Hortense went to Strasbourg to join her mother, who had gone there with the Emperor at the opening of the Austrian campaign. A short time after her arrival, she was persuaded by her cousin Stéphanie to visit with her the baths of Baden. She was accompanied by her two sons, from whom she was rarely separated. This brought her a severe reprimand from the Emperor:

[EBERSDORF], 31 May 1809

My daughter, I am much displeased at your leaving France, and especially that you should have taken my nephews. As you are at the waters of Baden, remain there; but an hour after the receipt of the present letter, send my two nephews back to the Empress at Strasbourg; they should never leave France. This is the first time that I have had occasion to be displeased with you, but you must not dispose of my nephews without my permission; you must realize the bad effect that that produces.

At the same time, in a letter to Joséphine, he says: "I have written you that you may go to Plombières. I do not care to have you go to Baden: you must not leave France. I have ordered the two princes to return to France."

On her return to Strasbourg, Hortense left at once with her mother for Plombières, where she remained four full months, while Joséphine returned to Malmaison in August.

The last of April, the Empress was also joined at Strasbourg by Catherine, who came to take refuge with her at the time of the German raids in Westphalia. When Joséphine left for Plombières, early in June, Catherine went to Spa, where she remained for six weeks, except for a brief visit to Madame and Pauline at Aix. On the 29 July, after an absence of

three months, she returned to Cassel. Notwithstanding all of Jérôme's notorious infidelities, he always displayed great tenderness for his wife, and Catherine remained devoted to him until the end. Their married life was the happiest of any in the Bonaparte family: all the other couples were more or less disunited by ambition and politics.

CHAPTER TWENTY-FIVE

SEPTEMBER 1807 — DECEMBER 1809

THE DIVORCE

The Divorce Broached for the First Time — The Zeal of Fouché Rebuked — Rumors at Paris — Napoleon's Vacillations — The Matter Brought up at Erfurt — Alexander's Duplicity — His Sister's Marriage — Napoleon Finally Makes up His Mind — Mme. Walewska at Vienna — Their Child — The Court at Fontainebleau — Joséphine's Cold Reception — The December Fêtes at Paris — Gathering of the Clan — Hortense Warned — Arrival of the Sovereigns — Napoleon Notifies Joséphine — His Talk with Hortense — Arrival of Eugène — His Conference with the Emperor and Empress — Joséphine's Last Appearances in Public — The Play at Grosbois — Final Acts of the Divorce — Statements of Napoleon and Joséphine — Eugène's Address to the Senate — Napoleon Goes to the Trianon — Joséphine's Farewell to the Tuileries

THE two years 1805 and 1806 had been the happiest and the most tranquil in the life of the Empress: she had reached the height of her fortunes, and her future seemed assured. Then, at the end of 1806, came the first shock to her complacency: Léon was born on the 13 December, and Napoleon, for the first time, was sure that he was a father. Five months later, on the 5 May 1807, occurred the death of the son of Louis and Hortense, the little Napoleon, whom the Emperor had practically designated as his successor. "It was the passing of Joséphine which was announced by the big bell of Notre-Dame." [1]

The first event had removed certain doubts from Napoleon's mind; the second had confirmed his wavering resolution. He ordered drawn up a list of the European princesses of marriageable age, and suitable for his purposes. The list was very short — only nine names in all — and the number seriously considered was soon reduced to three: the Grand Duchess Cath-

[1] Masson, *Joséphine repudiée*, 28.

erine, of Russia; the Archduchess Marie-Louise, of Austria; and the Princess Marie-Auguste, of Saxony.

Holding his views that a political alliance is never stable unless strengthened by a family tie, at Tilsit Napoleon naturally thought of the sister of Alexander. A remark of the Czar, which was perhaps only one of politeness, that he would be happy to give his sister to Jérôme, served to confirm Napoleon's conviction that a proposition from himself would not be refused. It was one of Napoleon's faults that he was always prone to jump to conclusions, and he seemed to believe that this casual remark of Alexander's was a formal engagement, the execution of which depended only upon himself. He did not take into account the declared hostility of the Empress *mère,* who, under the will of her husband, alone had the disposition of her daughters' hands. Nevertheless, it is possible that Napoleon might have been accepted if he had made his demand at that time.

After the return of the Emperor from Tilsit, during the visit of the Court to Fontainebleau, as we have seen,[2] the question was broached to Joséphine; but she played her cards so well that the matter was dropped for the time-being.

On the 16 November, Napoleon departed for Italy, where he regulated the affairs of Eugène, and had his celebrated interview with Lucien. During his absence, Fouché continued his activities, endeavoring in every way to influence public opinion in favor of the divorce. This brought a second reprimand from the Emperor, who wrote from Venice the 30 November: "I have let you know my opinion upon the folly of the steps you took at Fontainebleau relative to my private affairs. After having read your bulletin of the 19th, and being well aware of your moves at Paris, I can only reiterate to you that your duty is to follow my opinion, and not to act according to your own caprice." From Napoleon, this rebuke was very mild, and was hardly calculated to arrest the activities of such a man as Fouché. This letter was followed by another a week later, to Maret, in which Napoleon suggested that he

[2] See Vol. I, *275 et seq.*

should talk to Fouché, " without seeming to have instructions from me," and endeavor to put a stop to the activities of the Minister of Police. All of these measures were so mild that one doubts whether Napoleon was not acting solely for the sake of appearances.

A month after the return of the Emperor from Italy, in February 1808 there were new rumors in the salons of Paris that the divorce would certainly take place. Catherine, at this time, wrote her father: " M. Savary, on his return from Petersburg, has brought the articles, all signed and arranged, for the new marriage of the Emperor with the Grand Duchess Marie." [3]

Catherine was so certain of her facts that she even announced the arrival of the Viceroy for the first of March, " to escort his mother to Italy." And Prince William, of Prussia, wrote at the same time that the Prince de Bénévant (Talleyrand) was leaving for Petersburg to bring back the Grand Duchess.

In this matter of the Russian marriage, Napoleon appears to have been misinformed or deceived from first to last. He was ignorant for a year of the negotiations begun immediately after Tilsit to marry the Grand Duchess Catherine, for whom half a dozen *partis* were considered. For his blindness, however, he himself was mainly to blame. If he had carefully read the reports of Savary and, later, of Caulaincourt, from Saint Petersburg, it is hard to understand how he could have misjudged so completely the real sentiments of the Court of Russia in his regard.

At the beginning of March, one day when there was to be a large reception at the Tuileries, the Emperor announced his decision to Talleyrand in such positive terms that the latter told Rémusat, whom he met a few minutes later, that the divorce was a certainty. That evening, after dining with the Emperor as usual, Joséphine went to her room to change her toilette for the reception. Suddenly, a chamberlain came to tell her that the Emperor was ill, and she rushed to his side. She found

[3] The Queen of Westphalia does not seem to have been very familiar with the names of her cousins: Marie was married 3 August 1804 to the Prince of Saxe-Weimar.

Napoleon in a state of great nervous excitement. He wept, and pressed her in his arms, crying: "No, my poor Joséphine, I can never leave thee!" The assembly was curtly dismissed, and the Empress was compelled to pass the night with her husband. It was not until morning that he recovered his equanimity. "What a devil of a man," said Talleyrand in disgust, "to give way continually to his first impulse, and never to know what he wants to do!"

Napoleon was still so much attached to Joséphine that he continued for months to vacillate between the voice of his heart and the demands of State policy. To Talleyrand, he said: "If I separate from my wife I shall renounce at once all the charm that she brings to my private life. I must study the tastes and the habits of a new and young wife. This one adapts herself in every way and knows me perfectly. Finally, I shall repay with ingratitude all that she has done for me; for me she is a tie with many people." Again, he said to Champagny: "If I have the misfortune to lose her, reasons of State will force me to remarry; but then I shall wed one capable of giving me children; she [Joséphine] alone will have been my life's companion."

Thus, in the moments that he seemed the most decided, he could never come to the point of giving up Joséphine; and his real attachment to his wife is proved by the fact that this conflict between love and duty lasted for a period of fully three years.

Whether or not Joséphine felt the same affection for Napoleon is a difficult question to answer. We think that she did; but such is not the opinion of M. Masson. He says: "Firm in the stand she has taken, in nowise troubled by a love long since forgotten, she defends only *her position:* she has no confidence in these pathetic scenes; she pretends that Bonaparte passes too quickly from tender protestations to quarrels; . . . that he wishes to tire her out, to make her ill, . . . to disgust her with him by tormenting her continuously!"[4]

Notwithstanding all the reports and rumors in the salons of Paris, the question of a family alliance between the sovereigns

[4] See Masson, *Ibid*, 44.

of France and Russia had never even been touched upon in their correspondence. But when Napoleon went to Erfurt in the autumn of 1808, he had decided to make some overtures to Alexander on the subject, and he took Talleyrand with him mainly for that purpose. At this time Talleyrand had come to the conclusion that Napoleon could not sustain for many years more his struggle against all Europe, and that his Spanish enterprise had still further compromised his position. The prince had therefore decided to betray the master whom he had always secretly detested: "At Erfurt he will inaugurate with Alexander the relations which will permit him, six years later, to do the honors of a conquered Paris to the Russian monarch." [5]

As soon as the Czar arrived, Talleyrand secured a private audience, at which he expressed his views with an audacious frankness. "Sire," he said, "what do you come here for? You must save Europe, and you can do so only by curbing Napoleon. The French people are civilized, their sovereign is not. The sovereign of Russia is civilized, and his people are not: the sovereign of Russia must therefore be the ally of the French people." [6]

Although Napoleon was not yet prepared to make a formal demand for the Grand Duchess Catherine, he authorized Talleyrand to broach the subject, but in such a manner as not to commit him. As neither the Czar nor the minister was favorable to such an alliance, they arranged to fool the Emperor. "It was necessary," wrote Talleyrand himself, "to reach an understanding sufficient to satisfy Napoleon, but with such reservations as to make the alliance difficult."

The position of Alexander is clearly shown in a letter written at this time to his mother, who had begged him to take advantage of the reverse of Baylen to declare war on "the sanguinary tyrant who governs Europe with a sceptre of iron."

"It is necessary," replied Alexander, "to enter for a certain time into the views of France, and prove to her that she can rest without suspicion regarding the intentions and the plans

[5] 1 Vandal, 420.
[6] 2 Metternich, 248.

of Russia. It is to these results that all our efforts must tend, in order to breathe freely for a while, and augment during this period so precious our means, our forces; but it is only in the most profound silence that we must labor to this end; not, in publishing in public places our armaments, our preparations; and in declaiming loudly against him in whom we lack confidence. . . . Must we, for a momentary reverse which Napoleon has experienced, ruin all our labors, and arouse suspicions regarding our real intentions? The set-back which he has had may be only temporary; would we not be sure then of bringing down on us all his vengeance, and are we yet in a position to brave it?" [7]

When Talleyrand sounded the Czar on the marriage, he states that Alexander understood him at the first word, and precisely as he wished to be understood. "If it depended solely upon me," Alexander said, "I should willingly give my consent, but it is not the only one you must have. My mother has preserved over her daughters a power which I must not contest. I can try to guide her: it is possible that she will follow me, but I do not dare to guarantee it. All that, inspired by a very true friendship, should satisfy the Emperor Napoleon."

To Caulaincourt, Alexander used later almost identically the same words: "A ukase, as well as the last wish of my father, gives to my mother the free and entire disposition of the establishment of her daughters. . . . If this matter depended upon me, you should have my word before leaving my cabinet, for, I assure you the idea pleases me." [8]

Following the conversation with Talleyrand, Alexander decided to speak to Napoleon on the subject. He said, in substance, that he approved the desire, expressed by the Emperor's best friends, and shared by his faithful subjects, to see him consolidate his work and his dynasty by a fruitful marriage. Napoleon was much moved by these words, which he construed

[7] Cited, Masson, *Ibid,* 50.
[8] Caulaincourt's Report of the 28 December 1809.

as a full consent to his wishes. If he had then spoken clearly, and made a formal demand for the hand of Catherine, Alexander might have given his assent, and used means to overcome his mother's objections. But Napoleon was not yet ready to commit himself irrevocably, and Alexander was entirely satisfied to have the matter left in this uncertain state.

The Empress-Mother, however, did not propose to have her hand forced. A week after Alexander's return to Saint Petersburg, the marriage of Catherine with the heir of the Duke of Oldenburg was officially announced. Rather than a throne shared with "the murderer of the Duc d'Enghien," she chose for the husband of her daughter this unattractive prince, who, in the words of Caulaincourt, was "plain, puny, covered with pimples, and hardly able to articulate."[9] He was without estates or fortune, but he had "the appearance of a man, and the title of prince," — what more could Catherine ask? There still remained the Grand Duchess Anne, but she was an immature child of fourteen, and for several years her youth would furnish a valid excuse. *Gagner du temps, c'est tout gagner!*

For a round year after his return from Erfurt, Napoleon left in abeyance the question of his divorce, which he did not have the time to bring to a conclusion. For nearly three months he was absent in Spain; during the nine months following, he was occupied with the Austrian campaign, and the peace negotiations at Vienna.

Upon his return from Austria, instead of going to Paris, Napoleon went directly to Fontainebleau, where he had summoned Joséphine, his principal ministers, and the princes of his family. He came back with his mind absolutely decided on the divorce. The hazards of the last campaign, during which his fortunes had more than once trembled in the balance, had convinced him of the necessity of assuring the permanency of his work by having a direct heir to his dynasty. This seemed to him the only means of putting an end to the intrigues of his family and his ministers: in case he were called from Paris by a new war,

[9] Letter to the Emperor, 23 November 1808.

EMPRESS JOSÉPHINE

the presence there of a living representative of himself would insure the tranquillity of the Empire.

From the middle of April to the end of October, he had been separated from Joséphine, and the bonds of habitude, so powerful over his mind and heart, had been weakened. At Vienna, after the armistice, he had been joined by his "Polish wife," Madame Walewska, with whom he had lived for three months on terms of the closest intimacy. She was as tender, as sweet, as submissive to his caprices, as Joséphine — a kind of morganatic spouse, who had none of the faults of the legitimate one: no debts, no foolish extravagance, no jealousy, no intrigues. Moreover, before leaving Vienna, Napoleon had the anticipation that in seven months he would again be a father; and this fact also had no little influence on his decision.[10]

On his return from Austria, Napoleon reached Fontainebleau at nine o'clock on the morning of the 26 October, twenty-four hours ahead of his schedule, and found no one to receive him except the concierge. To Cambacérès, who was the first to arrive, he openly declared his fixed intention of divorcing the Empress, and espousing either a Russian or an Austrian princess.

Next came Fouché, who took advantage of the opportunity to make an indirect attack on Joséphine. "There is not one of your marshals," he said, "who is not considering how to dispose of your estate if we have the misfortune to lose you. It is a case of Alexander's lieutenants eager for their kingdoms."

As soon as she heard of the return of the Emperor, Joséphine made all possible haste to come from Saint-Cloud, but she did not arrive until late in the afternoon. Then she received a very cold reception from Napoleon, who took advantage of this pretext to vent his ill-humor. "Ah! there you are at last," he exclaimed. "You did well to come, for I was about to leave for Saint-Cloud." At this brutal reception, after a separation

[10] The son of Napoleon and Marie Walewska was born in Poland 4 May 1810. As the Comte Walewski, he was well known in France during the Second Empire.

of six months, poor Joséphine's eyes filled with tears, and she nearly swooned. Napoleon then softened, took her in his arms, and tenderly embraced her. To avoid the embarrassment of a tête-à-tête dinner, the Emperor invited two of his ministers to his table, and displayed much amiability.

That evening, when Joséphine went to her rooms for the night, she discovered for the first time that, during the recent alterations to the château, the door to the private stairway communicating with the Emperor's suite had been closed. This was a significant fact, which spoke louder than words. Yet, when they left Fontainebleau for Paris, on the 14 November, Napoleon had not found courage to announce his decision, and Joséphine's hopes began to revive.

At Paris, there was soon a regular assembly of the members of the Imperial family, and of the crowned heads, the vassals of the Emperor. In the mind of Napoleon, the eventful scene of his divorce should have a double character: first, it was to be a tribute to the devotion and self-sacrifice of Joséphine, in immolating herself on the altar of duty and patriotism; second, it was to announce to the whole world that it was an act forced upon himself, against the interests of his heart, by the demands of his dynasty, and the highest reasons of State.

Two members of the family could not possibly be present: Élisa, who was enceinte, and Joseph, who was detained in Spain by the critical condition of affairs. Pauline was already in Paris; and to Caroline, he had written on the 14 October from Schönbrunn: "I have concluded peace, and I am starting to-night for Paris. If you were not so far away, and the season so advanced, I should have urged Murat to come to pass two months at Paris; but you could not be there before December, which is a horrible season for a Neapolitan. It is necessary therefore to put off the journey to Fontainebleau until another year."

But Caroline was not a woman to be deterred by the cold, the snow, the terrible passage of Mont-Cenis in the late autumn, and she determined not to lose this opportunity of going to Paris. Murat, who was at Rome, also received permission to

come to Paris, where he arrived on the 30 November. Caroline, who had started later, did not reach the city until the 4 December. They took up their quarters in the Pavillon de Flore, where lodgings had been assigned them.

Madame and Julie had already returned to Paris for the winter, and Jérôme had arrived early in November. He was followed by Catherine, a fortnight later, and they were installed in the hôtel of Prince Eugène, Rue de Lille. On the first day of December, Louis appeared, with a large suite of officers and domestics, and went to the Hôtel Brienne, the home of his mother. This was certainly a slight to his wife, who, since her return from Fontainebleau, had been at her city residence, Rue Cerutti.

In spite of all the rumors regarding the divorce, in the family and at the Court, Hortense was the only person who as yet had positive information on the subject. In a private talk which she had had with the Emperor at Fontainebleau, about her son, Napoleon had said: "France has no confidence in my brothers; Eugène does not bear my name; and, notwithstanding the pains that I have taken to assure the repose of France, after me there will be complete anarchy. A son of my own alone can put all in accord; and, if I have not secured a divorce, my attachment for your mother is the sole reason which has prevented me from doing so up to now, for it is the fervent desire of France."

Hortense was almost prostrated by this declaration, in which she saw, not only the doom of her mother, but also of her brother, herself, and her children. She well knew the hatred of the entire Bonaparte clan for the Beauharnais, and, with the powerful protection of the Emperor withdrawn, what mercy could she expect?

At a moment when Hortense would have liked to hide her grief in seclusion, she was forced to appear, with a smile on her lips, to welcome all the sovereigns who had rushed to Paris. The kings of Naples, Westphalia, and Holland, who were already there, were followed by the monarchs of Saxony, Würtemberg, and Bavaria, and the princes of the Confederation of

the Rhine. Ségur, the grand-master of ceremonies, had difficulty in finding suitable quarters for so many exalted personages, and complained that he was troubled by an *embarras de rois*. The Palais-Royal was not habitable, and nearly all the other palaces were occupied by the members of the Imperial family. The King of Saxony was placed in the Élysée, the King of Würtemberg in the Luxembourg, and the Bavarian monarch was given quarters in the Hôtel Marbeuf.

A week after his return to Paris, on the 22 November the Emperor ordered Champagny to write Caulaincourt, directing the ambassador to have a frank talk with the Czar, and ascertain whether Napoleon could count on his sister Anne.[11]

On the last day of November, Napoleon finally found the courage to break the fatal news to Joséphine. They had dined together as usual in the Emperor's apartment; but not a word was spoken, and neither of them ate a morsel. After dinner, Napoleon conducted Joséphine to the Salon of the Emperor, and, after a moment of silence, began to speak. When he said that the welfare of the Empire demanded the dissolution of their marriage, Joséphine made no reply, but burst into tears, and fell upon the floor in a swoon. Greatly agitated, Napoleon opened the door, and called to his assistance the prefect of the palace, Bausset, who was on duty. Between them, they managed to carry the Empress down the dark, narrow, winding staircase to her apartment on the ground floor. Then, after calling her maids, Napoleon withdrew, with tears in his eyes. He immediately sent for Corvisart, his personal physician; also for Cambacérès, Fouché, and Queen Hortense. After a few words with the two ministers he had a long talk with Hortense. "My decision is made," he said; "neither tears nor outcries will affect a resolution which has become unavoidable — a resolution absolutely necessary for the safety of the Empire."

"Sire," replied Hortense, "you will have neither tears nor outcries. The Empress will not fail to submit to your wishes,

[11] See *Napoleon and Marie-Louise*, 132–133.

and to descend from the throne, as she mounted it, by your will. Her children, content to renounce the grandeurs which have not made them happy, will willingly consecrate their lives to consoling the best and the tenderest of mothers. . . . In our exile we shall never forget all that we owe to the Emperor."

"Ah! you will abandon me!" cried the Emperor, bursting into tears; "you, my children; you, to whom I have been a father! No, you will not do that! You will remain with me; the future of your children imposes upon you this effort."

The Emperor then outlined to Hortense his plans for Joséphine's future: palaces, châteaux, a magnificent income, the first rank after the reigning Empress. At the end, he secured Hortense's promise to remain.

Eugène received at Milan, on the first of December, the Emperor's summons to Paris, and set out at once. Hortense met him at Nemours, a few miles south of Fontainebleau, and told him all that had taken place. He was not much surprised, for he had been kept well-posted by the reports of Lavalette and the daily letters from his mother.

On the 7 December, Eugène reached Paris, and descended at the Hôtel Marbeuf, which he had to leave almost immediately to make room for the King of Bavaria. He then sought an interview with the Emperor. Finding that the divorce was absolutely decided, he asked the permission of the Emperor to retire to private life, saying that he could no longer hold the office of viceroy after his mother had ceased to be empress. But, like his sister, he finally yielded to the pleas of the Emperor, and agreed to remain.

Eugène then asked the Emperor to consent to a meeting with Joséphine, where, in his presence, they could have a final explanation. Napoleon agreed, and the conference took place that same evening. The Emperor set forth in detail his motives, dwelt upon the necessity, and spoke of the stability of the Empire. Joséphine said, in turn, that these considerations should outweigh all others, and expressed her readiness to make this sacrifice for her country. Then she added, bursting into

tears: "As soon as we are separated, my children will be forgotten. Make Eugène King of Italy."

Eugène interrupted with the indignant words: "No! I beg you, leave me out of the question. Your son does not wish for a crown which would be, so to speak, the price of your separation." Napoleon was touched. "That is Eugène's true heart," he said. "He does well to trust to my affection."

An elaborate program had been arranged for the first ten days of December, to celebrate the double anniversary of the Coronation and the victory of Austerlitz, as well as the conclusion of peace with Austria. On the 3d, there was a *Te Deum* at Notre-Dame in the morning; the formal opening of the Corps Législatif in the afternoon; and a State dinner at the Tuileries in the evening. The following morning the Emperor held a grand review in the court of the Tuileries, and in the evening, there was a fête at the Hôtel-de-Ville.

As there had been no public announcement of the divorce, Joséphine was forced to attend all of these festivals; but, under the pretext that she was suffering from a *migraine,* she did not appear at the spectacle given at the Château on the 7th. She was also absent from the side of the Emperor the next day when he received in the Throne Room a deputation of the Legislative Bodies. On this occasion, in his reply to the address, the Emperor used a phrase which seemed to presage the coming event. "We shall always know how," he said, "my family and myself, to sacrifice even our dearest affections to the interests and the welfare of this great nation."

On the 11 December the Emperor and Empress appeared together in public for the last time, at a fête given at Grosbois [12] by the Prince de Neuchâtel. All of the kings and princes then in Paris, and a large part of the Court were present. Unfortunately the evening was marred by a most regrettable *contre-temps*. Berthier had arranged to entertain his guests by a play, to be given by actors from the Comédie-Française and the

[12] This fine château, the property of the Comte de Provence before the Revolution, and later of Barras and of Moreau, had been purchased of Moreau by Napoleon, and presented to Berthier.

Variétés, and he was foolish enough to leave to them the choice of the piece. They selected a comedy called *Cadet Roussel, professeur de déclamation,* which was very popular in Paris at that time, and which turned on the subject of divorce. Imagine the consternation of Napoleon and Joséphine when Brunet, the leading actor, announced his intention of securing a divorce, "in order to have ancestors"; followed by a change of mind, with the sage remark: "I know what my wife is, I do not know what the one I take may be like"!

We are told that Joséphine was seen once more, at a large reception and supper, given at the Tuileries on the evening of the 14 December, and that every one was "struck with the perfect propriety of her bearing in the presence of all these people who surrounded her, and who could not be ignorant of the fact that it was for the last time; that, in an hour, she would descend from the throne, and would leave the palace never to enter it again." This statement, which is quoted by M. Masson,[13] with an expression of doubt, does not seem to be based on good authority.[14]

Friday, the 15 December 1809, was the day chosen by the Emperor for the dissolution of his civil marriage. At nine o'clock in the evening, the Family Council assembled at the Tuileries, in the Salon of the Emperor. All the members of the Bonaparte family were present, except Joseph, Lucien, and Élisa. Eugène and Hortense were also there; as well as Cambacérès, the arch-chancellor, and Regnault, the secretary of State.

The palace was brilliantly illuminated, as on gala occasions, and all present were in full Court dress. Joséphine wore a perfectly plain white costume, with no jewels. Around the room were arranged the seats for the members of the family, in due order of precedence: armchairs for the Emperor, Empress, and

[13] Masson, *op. cit.*, 71.

[14] According to Schuermans (*Itinéraire général de Napoléon 1er*, 261), there was a meeting of the Private Council, that evening at ten o'clock, at which the Emperor was not present, to prepare the text of the acts of divorce. But the same authority is in error in stating that the family meeting immediately followed.

Madame Mère; chairs for the kings and queens; and stools for the others.

When all were assembled, the Emperor began to read his address:

"The policy of my monarchy, the interests and the needs of my people, which have constantly guided my actions, demand that, after myself, I leave to children, heirs of my love for my people, this throne upon which Providence has placed me. But, for several years past, I have lost the hope of having children of my marriage with my well-loved spouse, the Empress Joséphine. It is this which has led me to sacrifice the dearest affections of my heart, to listen only to the welfare of the State, and to desire the dissolution of our marriage.

"Arrived at the age of forty years, I can conceive the hope of living long enough to bring up in my spirit and my thought the children whom it may please Providence to give me. God knows how much such a resolution has cost my heart; but there is no sacrifice above my courage, when it is proved to me that it is for the benefit of France."

Departing now from the text of the address which had been carefully prepared in advance, the Emperor continued:

"I must add that, far from ever having had cause for complaint, I can, on the contrary, only congratulate myself on the affection and tenderness of my well-loved spouse. She has graced fifteen years of my life, and the memory of this will remain ever engraved upon my heart. She was crowned by my hand; I desire that she shall keep the rank and title of crowned Empress; but above all that she shall never doubt my feelings, and that she shall have me always as her best and dearest friend."

When it came the turn of Joséphine to speak, it was evident that she, too, had modified the terms of the address prepared for her, and substituted a few well chosen words of her own. But she had only read a few sentences when her voice became choked with sobs, and she handed the paper to Regnault, who continued the discourse:

"With the permission of our august and dear spouse, I de-

clare that, since I have no hope of bearing children, who can satisfy the requirements of his policy and the interests of France, it is my pleasure to give him the greatest proof of attachment and devotion which has ever been given on earth. I owe all to his bounty; it was his hand which crowned me, and, from the summit of this throne, I have received nothing but proofs of affection and love from the French people. I am recognizing all this, I believe, in consenting to the dissolution of a marriage which is now an obstacle to the welfare of France: which deprives her of the good fortune of being ruled one day by the descendants of the great man so plainly raised up by Providence to remove the evils of a terrible Revolution, and to set up again the altar, the throne, and the social order. But the dissolution of my marriage will make no change in the feelings of my heart; the Emperor will always have in me his best friend. I know how much this act, which is made necessary by his policy, and by such great interests, has wounded his heart; but we shall win glory, both of us, by the sacrifice which we are making for the good of our country."

Even the hostile Bonapartes were moved by these eloquent and touching words. The meeting ended with the signature by each member of the Imperial family of the document prepared by Cambacérès. The Emperor then accompanied Joséphine to her own apartment, where he left her after a tender embrace.

The following morning, Eugène was present, for the first time, at a meeting of the Senate, where the decree was to be passed, annulling the civil marriage. After taking his oath of office, he spoke in favor of the resolution, saying: "I think that it is my duty, under the present circumstances, to make plain the sentiments by which my family is animated. My mother, my sister, and myself, we owe everything to the Emperor. To us, he has been a real father. At all times, he will find, in us, devoted children, and submissive subjects. It is important for the welfare of France that the founder of this Fourth Dynasty shall grow old surrounded by direct heirs who shall be our guarantee, as a pledge of the country's glory. When my mother

was crowned before the whole nation, by the hands of her august spouse, she contracted the obligation to sacrifice all her affections to the interests of France. She has fulfilled this paramount duty with courage, nobility, and dignity."

After a sleepless night, Joséphine had been making her final preparations to leave the Tuileries forever. It had been arranged that during the course of the day she should go to Malmaison, while the Emperor was to depart for the Trianon. When his carriage was announced, at four o'clock, Napoleon called to his secretary, Méneval, to follow him, and rapidly descended the private staircase which communicated with the apartment of the Empress on the ground-floor. On his entrance, Joséphine, who was awaiting him alone, threw herself into his arms, and Napoleon tenderly embraced her. Then she fainted, and Méneval rang for her attendants. To avoid a prolongation of the affecting scene, Napoleon left as soon as he saw that she was recovering consciousness, telling his secretary to remain. He passed through the salons on the ground-floor, to the court, and entered his carriage which bore him away to Versailles.

When Joséphine found that Napoleon was gone, she said to Méneval: "Tell the Emperor not to forget me. Assure him of my undying affection. Promise me to send me news of him as soon as you reach the Trianon, and see that he writes me."

It was now the turn of Joséphine to leave. All the members of the palace household had gathered in the vestibule to see the Empress depart; and there was hardly a dry eye, for the "good Joséphine" was loved and regretted by all.

For the last time, Joséphine enters her carriage in the court of the Tuileries, and departs for Malmaison, which in the future is to be her principal residence.

CHAPTER TWENTY-SIX

NOVEMBER 1809 — FEBRUARY 1810

MARRIAGE NEGOTIATIONS

Napoleon's Preference for the Grand Duchess Anne — Opposition of Her Mother — Reports of Caulaincourt — Napoleon's First Move — Followed by a Formal Demand — The Negotiations Delayed by the Czar's Absence — The Question Referred to the Empress-Mother — Napoleon Authorizes Some Approaches to Austria — Reports of Laborde and Sémonville — Laborde Directed to Sound Schwarzenberg — Joséphine Called in — Unfavorable News from Russia — The Emperor Refers the Matter to a Council — An Austrian Alliance Favored — Later News from Petersburg — Napoleon Demands the Hand of the Archduchess Louise — The Contract Signed — The Announcement to Russia — Napoleon's Plans for His Wedding — A Sketch of Louise — The Refusal of Russia — Alexander's Chagrin on Hearing of the Austrian Marriage — A Death-Blow to the Entente

FROM the first, it had been the intention of Napoleon to make the period of transition between the two empresses as brief as possible, and hardly perceptible: that in the eyes of France, and of the world, a princess of royal blood should appear immediately at his side, in the place made vacant by the departure of Joséphine. "To govern better the imaginations of men, Napoleon considered it indispensable never to let them be troubled or led astray by the prolonged expectation of great events."[1]

For many reasons, Napoleon's preference was for the Grand Duchess Anne, the sister of his ally, Alexander. This choice was natural, legitimate, and almost forced. At the time the matter was first brought up, at Erfurt in 1808, only the elder sister, Catherine, was considered, as Anne was then too young. Since that date, more than fourteen months had rolled around: Catherine was married, and the choice at present was limited to Anne, who would be fifteen in January, and presumably

[1] 2 Vandal, 174.

sufficiently mature for marriage. After the advances which he had made at Erfurt, the Emperor felt that he was "in honor bound"[2] not to seek another alliance before resuming, and bringing to a head, the negotiations begun with Russia. Any other course might furnish the Czar with a legitimate subject of discontent, and strike another blow at the entente.

Since his return from Vienna, in October, with a view of paving the way for a favorable reception of his demand, Napoleon had renewed all the minute attentions which he had showed Alexander after Tilsit, and had paid his court to Russia with that mixture of dignity and grace which he knew so well how to employ to gain his ends. The Russian ambassador, Prince Kourakine, was invited to Fontainebleau, during the sojourn of the Court there, and was treated with the highest distinction. The Emperor even met the desire of the Czar to place an issue of bonds on the Paris Bourse; and if the marriage had become an accomplished fact, a loan of "thirty to fifty millions" would have figured in the *corbeille*.[3]

Having taken these steps, Napoleon had now to consider how to overcome the obstacle indicated by Alexander at Erfurt, without suggesting any means of removing it. If a family alliance, he had said, was his dearest wish, it was not himself, but his mother, who would have the final decision in the matter: the will of the late Czar, expressed in a solemn act, had given to the Empress-Dowager the exclusive right to dispose of the hands of her daughters in marriage.

Since his return from Erfurt, without any formal instructions from the Emperor on the subject, Caulaincourt had never lost sight of this object, and had endeavored constantly to obtain new light on the question. He had observed that, on all occasions of ceremony, while the Czar posed as the chief of the State, it was his mother who appeared as the head of the family. The day of the betrothal of Catherine and Oldenburg, the mother had presided over the ceremonies: in the chapel of the Winter Palace, it was she who joined their hands, and who re-

[2] Corresp. 16210.

[3] Champagny to Caulaincourt, 7 and 16 November, and 12 December 1809.

ceived their homages. "The first mark of the daughter's respect," wrote the ambassador, "was always for her mother."[4]

In the same report, Caulaincourt speaks of the extreme care of the Czar to efface himself, and to figure only as a spectator or witness in the ceremony — "like a private individual." Furthermore, the ambassador made it his duty to inform his master of these facts in a private letter, written the 4 February, to which the Emperor made no reply. "The first ostensible approach," he said, "as well as the official demand, should be addressed to the mother."

But Napoleon considered himself too strong and too great to follow such a course: "What had he to do with the will of a woman; to defer, to her, reasons of State!" Besides, it was impossible for him to imagine that the Autocrat of All the Russias was not the master of his own household: if Alexander stressed the opposition of his mother, it was only a pretext, and not a reason, for refusing his demand.

On the 22 November, a week before the announcement of the divorce to Joséphine, Napoleon made his first move. He ordered Champagny to write Caulaincourt a letter, which, for the sake of greater secrecy, the minister himself was directed to code. It was worded as follows:

You know the entreaties made to the Emperor for a long time past by the men the most attached to his person and to the great interests of his dynasty. These approaches have been for a long time without result; but everything leads me to believe that, after having profoundly reflected on the situation of France and of his family, the Emperor is finally about to decide upon a divorce. . . .

At Erfurt the rumors of a divorce came to the ears of the Emperor Alexander, who must [recall] having spoken to the Emperor about them, and having said to him that the Princess Anne, his sister, was at his disposition. The Emperor desires you to take up the matter, frankly and simply, with the Emperor Alexander, and speak to him in these terms:

"I have reason to think that the Emperor, pressed by all

[4] *On dit*, 17 January 1809.

France, is preparing for a divorce. May I announce that we can count on your sister? Let Your Majesty think the matter over for two days, and give me a frank reply — not as to the French ambassador, but as to a person devoted to the two families. It is not a formal demand which I make; it is a frank statement of your intentions which I solicit." . . .

There remains for you to let us know the qualities of the young princess, and above all the epoch that she may be in a condition to become a mother; for, in the actual calculations, six months of difference are an object.[5]

As the sole reason and excuse for the divorce was the necessity of giving as soon as possible an heir to the Empire, it was quite natural that Napoleon should desire to be assured regarding the maturity of the young princess, as well as whether his proposition would be aceptable, before making a formal demand.

Three weeks later (13 December), the Emperor called Champagny to the Tuileries, and dictated a second letter to Caulaincourt, in which the ambassador was authorized to make a formal demand, "subject to these three positive underlying ideas":

(1) That the Emperor prefers, if you have no objection which can change his opinion, the sister of the Emperor of Russia first of all.

(2) That we here calculate the moments, for, all this being a matter of politics, the Emperor is in haste to assure his great interests by having children.

(3) That we attach no kind of importance to conditions, even those of religion.

You have then at this moment all the latitude necessary to conduct yourself with the prudence which the circumstances demand, and to proceed, if there be an opening, without more delay. It will then be very grievous if your response to this letter leaves us in doubt; and, although this matter may fall through, as the result of the information that you have acquired, regarding which the Emperor relies on you, or by the refusal of the consent of the Russian Court, the essential point

[5] Russian Archives. See also 9 Bignon, 64–65.

is that you shall proceed if there be an opportunity. In all your combinations, start from the principle that children are what we want. . . . The Emperor wishes to know positively, before the end of January, what to expect.[6]

The first courier was delayed by the formalities of the frontier and the rigors of the Russian winter, so that the despatch did not reach Saint Petersburg until the 14 December. As Alexander had left the city four days before, for a visit to Moscow, and to his sister Catherine at Tver, it was impossible for Caulaincourt to see him until after his return, on the 26 December.

Two days after the return of the Czar, the ambassador was invited to dinner at the palace, and had a good opportunity for a private conversation with Alexander. The Czar himself brought up the matter of the divorce, by saying that he was glad that Napoleon at last was thinking of the future of his dynasty. This gave Caulaincourt the opening he wanted. In accordance with the only instructions he had then received — the letter of the 22 November — he asked the Czar to tell him in strict confidence, after thinking the matter over for two days, whether he would be disposed to give his sister, in case a demand came from the Tuileries.

The reply of Alexander was more gracious than satisfactory. He said: "You will recall what I told you at Erfurt: a ukase, as well as the last wish of my father, gives to my mother the free and entire disposition of the establishment of her daughters. Her ideas are not always in accord with my wishes or my policy — not even with common-sense. If this matter depended upon me, you should have my word before leaving my cabinet, for, I assure you, the idea pleases me. I will think it over, and give you a reply, as you desire, but you must allow me at least ten days."[7]

[6] This letter, and the previous one, were first published by Bignon (IX, 64–65). Thiers was in error in stating (XI, 358) that nearly all the letters relating to the marriage had been destroyed: they were all preserved in the Russian Archives, and have been published, in whole or in part, by Bignon, Saint-Amand, Vandal, and Welschinger.

[7] Report of Caulaincourt, 28 December 1809.

Much to the surprise of Alexander, his mother did not immediately reject the proposition, when he talked it over with her, but asked time for reflection, and to consult Catherine, in whose judgment she placed great reliance. He reported to Caulaincourt that he thought the reply of his sister would be favorable, and that it would remove the last remaining objections of his mother. This information was immediately sent to Paris by the ambassador.

It was an invariable habit of Napoleon to have always a second plan in reserve, which could be substituted for his first in case of failure. "Je fais toujours mon thème de plusieurs façons," he once said.[8] Even before Caulaincourt's report reached Paris, about the 25 January, Napoleon had therefore begun some discreet approaches to the Court of Vienna. He had been encouraged to take this course by several events which had occurred during the preceding six weeks.

After the conclusion of the peace, in October, a young Frenchman named Alexandre de Laborde, who was attached to the general staff, had remained in Vienna to take charge of some details connected with the evacuation by the French troops. On account of his excellent social and political connections, he was well fitted for this task.

The last of November, Laborde had a very curious conversation with Metternich, the former Austrian ambassador to Paris, who, since the war, had succeeded Stadion as Minister of Foreign Affairs. The minister began by asking Laborde if he thought the Emperor really intended to divorce the Empress Joséphine; and then went on to speak of the possibility of a marriage of Napoleon to a princess of the House of Austria. "This idea," he said, "is my own. I have not sounded the intentions of the Emperor regarding it; but beyond the fact that I am almost certain that they will be favorable, such an event would have so fully the approbation of every one who possesses a fortune, a name, an existence in this country, I have no doubts on the subject; and, furthermore, I should regard

[8] 1 Taine, *Le Régime moderne*, 44.

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it as a real piece of good fortune for us, and a glory for the period of my ministry."

Laborde lost no time in making a record of this interview, and forwarded it in the official portfolio to the office of Foreign Affairs at Paris. The report was not signed, but it is in the handwriting of Laborde; and the authenticity of the incident is confirmed by an account of the conversation in the memoirs of Metternich.[9] That the document passed under the eyes of the Emperor is proved by the note on the margin: *Renvoyé à M. de Champagny,* in the scrawl of Napoleon, followed by his heavy *parafe* (initialled signature).

Confirmation of this report of Laborde's was received by Napoleon a few days later from another source. On the occasion of Joséphine's last reception at the Tuileries, early in December, Senator Sémonville happened to meet M. de Floret, of the Austrian embassy, whom he had known well for many years. Their conversation naturally turned upon the rumors of the approaching divorce, and the senator asked, "Can it be true that you would be willing to give us one of your archduchesses?" Floret replied, "Certainly." Thereupon, in answer to further questions from Sémonville, Floret asserted most positively that Metternich and Schwarzenberg were in favor of the marriage; that the Emperor Francis would not oppose it; and that the Empress would finally yield.

On leaving the palace, Sémonville went directly to the Duc de Bassano, to whom he related the conversation word for word. Maret wrote it out, and sent it to the Emperor the following morning.[10]

This episode, following so closely upon the other, made a decided impression upon the Emperor. The more Russia seemed to draw away, the more he felt inclined to respond to the advances of Austria. To Maret, he made the remark that, in point of relationship, a son-in-law was much closer than a brother-in-law, and might assure him a durable ascendancy

[9] See 2 Metternich, 313–314. The minister, however, pretends that Laborde brought the subject up, which is most improbable.

[10] Ernouf, *Maret, duc de Bassano,* 272.

over a man so susceptible to family sentiments as the Emperor Francis.[11]

Finally, at a conference which he had with Maret during his stay at the Trianon, the Emperor gave instructions to make some overtures to Schwarzenberg, proceeding always with much dexterity, circumspection, and mystery. "It is important," he said, "to engage the ambassador without binding me." [12]

Owing to the confidences that he had received at Vienna, Laborde, who was now in Paris, was directed by Maret to take the matter up at once with the Austrian ambassador. During the next week Laborde had several interviews with Schwarzenberg, whom he found personally well-disposed, even profoundly interested in the matter; but without instructions from his Court, and inclined to be skeptical, as he was looking for a Russian marriage. Laborde encouraged his hopes, and insinuated that it would be well for him "to be prepared for any event." [13]

Napoleon's next move was the most surprising of all. On Christmas day, he had invited Joséphine and Hortense to dine with him at the Trianon; and the following morning he had returned to Paris. On New Year's day, he drove out from the Tuileries to Malmaison to see Joséphine, and during the course of this visit he asked her assistance in the choice of her successor! Strange as it may seem, he found Joséphine ready and willing to do everything in her power to further his plans.

At this time, Joséphine had never met the Emperor Alexander, who later became her warm friend, and she was more inclined to favor the Austrian alliance. The Emperor Francis had won her heart by the magnificent presents he had sent her at the time of the peace of Campo-Formio, in 1797. Both she and Hortense had always been on intimate terms with M. and Mme. de Metternich; and she felt also that the Austrian connection would assure Eugène's position in Italy. Furthermore, Joséphine had always been a royalist at heart, and she wished

[11] Ernouf, *Maret, duc de Bassano,* 273.
[12] *Ibid,* 274.
[13] *Ibid,* 274; Welschinger, 70–81, 149–157.

to see the Empire imitate the Monarchy in its family alliances.

As soon as the Emperor had left, therefore, Joséphine wrote a note to Mme. de Metternich, who was still in Paris, asking her to call the following day. On this occasion, the wife of the Austrian Minister of Foreign Affairs heard "some very extraordinary things." Prince Eugène and Queen Hortense, who received her on her arrival at Malmaison, informed her that they were "Austrians at heart"; and the Empress, who entered the room a few minutes later, astonished her by saying that she was warmly in favor of the Habsburg alliance, and was sure that it could be arranged. The Emperor, when she saw him the previous day, had said that his choice was not yet made, but she was confident that he would abandon the Russian project as soon as he was assured of the hand of the Archduchess.[14]

As was expected, this remarkable news was immediately sent to Vienna, and by return courier the Austrian ambassador received instructions from the Foreign Office, in case the Emperor Napoleon should think of the Archduchess Louise, "far from rejecting the idea, to follow it up, and not refuse any openings which might be made to him."[15] Soon after the middle of January, therefore, Napoleon became certain that Austria would welcome his demand.

The first despatches from Caulaincourt, reporting his interviews with the Czar, reached Paris about the 25 January. In reading them, Napoleon received a very unfavorable impression: he was far from sharing the optimistic views of his ambassador. In the repeated delays, in the references of the matter to Alexander's mother and sister, he saw only an attempt to gain time, and elude his demand, without absolutely refusing it.

After Mass, on Sunday the 28 January,[16] the Emperor called

[14] 2 Metternich, 314–315.

[15] 2 Metternich, 313.

[16] It is remarkable that there should be so much uncertainty regarding the exact date of this meeting. Thiers, followed by nearly all of the historians,

a meeting of the grand dignitaries of the Empire, to discuss the respective advantages and disadvantages of a matrimonial alliance with Russia, Austria, or Saxony. To this council were summoned the kings of the Bonaparte family; Prince Eugène, Cardinal Fesch, the ministers, and the presidents of the Senate and the Corps Législatif. All of these personages assembled in the Salon of the Emperor, where the divorce had been pronounced only six weeks before!

When the dignitaries were all assembled, the Emperor entered, and took his place at the head of the council-table. He opened the meeting by saying, in substance, that he could wed a princess of Russia, Austria, or Saxony: it only remained for him to designate " the one who will first pass under the Arc de Triomphe to enter Paris." [17]

Champagny, Duc de Cadore, who had been in charge of the negotiations, in his capacity of Minister of Foreign Affairs, then gave a brief statement regarding the ages and other qualifications of the three princesses who had been most seriously considered: Anne of Russia, Marie-Louise of Austria, and Marie-Auguste of Saxony. The question was then thrown open for discussion, and every one was invited to state his views.

Thiers gives a circumstantial report of the meeting, but his story rests on the evidence of one person only — the Arch-Chancellor Cambacérès, and other witnesses have given very different versions. This makes it difficult to reconstitute the

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places it on the 21st, Schuermans on the 22d, and Vandal on Sunday the 29th, which was a Monday. But there is little doubt that the date given in the text is correct. The despatches of Schwarzenberg furnish contemporary evidence which is more reliable than the memoirs, written at a much later date, upon which the historians have relied. A memorandum, preserved in the National Archives, dated the first of February, speaks of the sensation caused in Paris society, *depuis trois jours,* by the council held at the Tuileries, which corresponds with the 28 January. Finally, in a letter under date of the 6 February, the Emperor refers to the meeting " held a few days since." The date is of importance, mainly, as showing that Napoleon did not call the meeting until after receiving the despatches from Russia. (See Thiers; Schuermans; 2 Vandal, 237 and 544; Corresp. 16210; and *mémoire* of Pellenc in French Archives.)

[17] Helfert, 87.

scene: no two accounts agree upon the date, the names of those present, or the positions taken.[18]

The arch-treasurer, Lebrun, seems to have been the only one to speak in favor of the Saxon princess, and he had one or two supporters. Cambacérès and King Murat warmly advocated the Grand Duchess Anne, while Prince Eugène, Berthier, Champagny, Fesch, Fontanes, Maret, Mollien, and Talleyrand declared for the Archduchess Louise.

The question was not put to vote, but all of the ablest counselors of the Emperor were in favor of Austria. The strongest appeal for Russia was made by Cambacérès. He predicted that the nation not chosen would almost inevitably become an enemy; from Austria, four times humbled by France, there was little to fear; the future point of danger lay in the great Empire of the North, with its enormous resources and its great latent force of resistance. In the light of after-events, it seems strange that this solemn warning made so little impression on the assemblage.

The Emperor listened to the debate, for the most part, in silence, giving no signs of approval or disapproval. Only once did he show his discontent. When General Cessac, who had recently been made a minister in the War Department, exclaimed, "Austria is no longer a Great Power!" Napoleon calmly interrupted with the remark, "It is evident, sir, that you were not at Wagram." [19]

As the Emperor placed no injunctions of secrecy, the details of the meeting immediately became known in Paris, and created a great sensation. The public seemed to be divided in its sentiments, but the weight of opinion clearly favored the Austrian alliance. The principal opposition came from the two extreme factions: the former Jacobins, and the devoted Royalists. The former regarded the marriage as a repudiation of the ideas of the Revolution, and a return to the principles of the Monarchy; while the latter were "indignant at the idea of a marriage

[18] See 11 Thiers, 368–373; also the memoirs of Bassano, Mollien, Talleyrand, and others.

[19] Helfert, 87; 2 Beugnot, 359.

which would efface upon the brow of Bonaparte the sign of the usurpation."

On the evening of the 5 February, a second courier arrived from Saint Petersburg, bearing two despatches from Caulaincourt, dated the 15 and 21 January. He stated that a reply had been received from Catherine, and it was favorable; but still the mother seemed unable to come to a decision. She raised many objections, but the principal one was the tender age of Anne. She cited the cases of two of her daughters who had married young, and died at an early age. Alexander reported all her statements to Caulaincourt, to show "the thousand difficulties which passed through his mother's head." "There are no reasons," he said, "which you have to combat, and to which you can oppose others: there is the mind of a woman, and the most unreasonable of all."

Champagny spent the night in decoding the two despatches, and they were read by the Emperor the morning of the 6 February. At the time that the last letter was written (21 January), the second delay of ten days had more than elapsed, and there was still no definite decision. Napoleon felt sure that the final answer would be a refusal, and he no longer hesitated to act on this conviction. He summoned Prince Eugène to his cabinet, and instructed him to see the Austrian ambassador at once. When Eugène finally secured an interview with Schwarzenberg, at six o'clock that evening, he informed the ambassador that the Emperor was decided to espouse the Archduchess Louise, but only on one condition — the contract must be signed within twenty-four hours! Any adjournment would be considered equivalent to a refusal. "Never had an ambassador been placed in a more cruel position," wrote Eugène in his memoirs. He had been instructed to refuse no advances; but no one had imagined that Napoleon's demand, if made, would be so brusque, and he had received no authority to sign a contract. But Schwarzenberg rose to the occasion: after a brief hesitation, he declared that he would sign the papers as soon as they were prepared.

Eugène hastened back to the Tuileries to report the good

news to the Emperor, who made no effort to conceal his joy and satisfaction. His union with a daughter of the German Cæsars would more than counter-balance his rebuff by the House of Romanoff. He immediately called together the same council which had met nine days before, to assemble at the Tuileries at a late hour in the evening. In some unknown way, the news had already spread through the legations and the salons of the capital, and the dignitaries, when they came together, knew that they were called, not for consultation, but to ratify an accomplished fact.

The Emperor directed Champagny to read in full the four despatches from Caulaincourt, and then dismissed the meeting, with the announcement of his decision to espouse the Archduchess Louise. Notwithstanding the late hour at which the assembly broke up, Champagny was instructed to prepare the marriage contract at once, and make an appointment with Schwarzenberg for its signature at noon the next day. He was to follow as closely as possible the form used for Marie-Antoinette and the Dauphin, forty years before. After submitting this paper to the Emperor at his *lever*, and securing his approval, the minister was just in time to keep his rendez-vous with the Austrian ambassador. The contract was signed by Schwarzenberg, and at once despatched to Vienna by a special courier.

This same day, the 7 February, the Emperor dictated the form of two despatches, to be prepared by Champagny, for transmission to Saint Petersburg. In the first, which was to be antedated, the minister was to dwell upon the obstacles to the Russian marriage: the youth of Anne, the uncertainty regarding her maturity, and the religious differences. In the second letter, which was to be post-dated, the choice of the Archduchess was to be announced, with many plausible explanations.

The Emperor then turned his attention to the Austrian marriage, and dictated the program for the ceremonies at Vienna, as well as the itinerary of the journey of the new Empress to

Paris. He calculated that the contract ought to reach Vienna in a week, and the ratification be received at Paris by the end of a fortnight. The Prince de Neuchâtel, designated as ambassador extraordinary, would leave Paris on the 22 February, and reach Vienna by the first of March. The marriage there, by procuration, would take place that week, and Marie-Louise could be in Paris by the middle of March. These details arranged, Napoleon fixed the amount of her dower, and arranged her household. Everything was anticipated with the same precision with which he laid out a plan of campaign.

By nightfall of this eventful day, Napoleon had made all the arrangements, so that this marriage, decided upon the previous evening, should be an accomplished fact by the end of six weeks. The only thing he put off until the following day was to demand some information regarding the personality of his future bride. Fortunately, Comte Otto, the new ambassador to Vienna, had foreseen this demand, and soon after his arrival on the 25 January had sent to the French Foreign Office the following sketch of Louise: [20]

"The princesse, eighteen years of age, is tall and well-formed; she has a noble bearing, an agreeable countenance, much grace, an expression of sweetness and affability which inspires confidence. She seems to have received a very careful education; she sings, she plays the piano well, and she paints in oil. I turned the conversation on the arts, and she spoke with much intelligence, and above all with that modesty which embellishes youth."

In reaching his decision to abandon the project for the Russian marriage, and to accept the overtures of Austria, Napoleon had showed his usual clear judgment. The despatches from Champagny to Caulaincourt crossed on the way to Russia the reply of the Czar, and that reply was a refusal. On the 4 February, Alexander informed Caulaincourt that his mother had finally reached a decision, and that she was unwilling to consent to the marriage of her daughter under two years. The

[20] Otto to Champagny, Foreign Archives.

age of Anne was "the sole obstacle which the Empress found to the marriage." In communicating this decision to the ambassador, the Czar begged him to let the matter drop. "In view of the age of my sister, and the obstinate spirit of my mother," he said, . . . "I think that it would be a humiliation for the Emperor and myself, at this moment, to ask my mother again to change her decision." [21]

In his negotiations for the hand of the Grand Duchess Anne, Napoleon had certainly disregarded the old adage, "to be off with the old love, before you are on with the new." If he had restrained his impatience for a fortnight longer, until the answer was received from Russia, Alexander would have had no cause for complaint. As it was, the Czar could hardly conceal his chagrin when he learned of the Austrian marriage. In his private talks with Caulaincourt, he did not hesitate to say that he thought the Emperor might have shown more consideration and delicacy. In what an embarrassing position they would all have been placed, if the Russian answer had been an acceptance, instead of a refusal! "It is fortunate," he said, "that the age of my sister stopped us here. . . . Where would we be now, if I had used less consideration for my mother, if I had shown less respect for her rights? What reproaches also would I not have had to make to you? The delays of which you then complained were therefore only the part of wisdom." [22]

Although the Czar treated the French ambassador with the same consideration, and continued to reiterate on all occasions his best wishes for the happiness of his ally, it was evident to Caulaincourt that he looked for an early rupture of the entente. This was also the general expectation at Paris and at Vienna. Dalberg wrote Metternich from Paris: "You can be sure of one thing: that in five months we shall be cold toward Russia, and in less than eighteen months at war with her." [23] The

[21] In 1816, Anne married the Prince of Orange, afterwards William II, King of the Netherlands, and was the grandmother of the present queen, Wilhelmina, of Holland.

[22] Caulaincourt to Champagny, 26 February 1810.

[23] Helfert, 354–358.

prediction of the aged arch-chancellor, Cambacérès, was to be realized sooner than any one anticipated. The Austrian marriage was a death-blow to the Russian alliance: it was to revive the almost extinct coalition, draw Napoleon into disastrous enterprises, and lead directly to his downfall.

CHAPTER TWENTY-SEVEN

MARCH — JUNE 1810

THE NEW EMPRESS

The Emperor Francis, of Austria — His Eldest Daughter, Louise — His Disastrous Wars with France — His Third Wife, Béatrice — The War of 1809 — Louise's Hatred of Napoleon — She Reluctantly Consents to the Marriage — The Joy of Austria — Difficulties over Napoleon's Divorce — The Matter Finally Arranged — The Ambassador Extraordinary Arrives at Vienna — The Official Demand — The Marriage Contract — The Ceremony at Vienna — The *Remise* — Napoleon Waits at Compiègne — His Meeting with Louise — The Arrangements Disregarded — *"Ils Sont Couchés!"* — Portrait of Marie-Louise — The Ceremonies at Paris — Absence of the "Black Cardinals" — Daily Life of the Empress — Her Love of Books, Flowers, Painting, and Music — Her Domination by Mme. de Montebello

THE Emperor Francis, of Austria, was about eighteen months older than Napoleon, having been born in February 1768. He had mounted the throne on the first of March 1792, upon the death of his father, Leopold, who was a son of Maria Theresa. At the age of twenty he had married Elizabeth of Würtemberg, who died at the end of two years. Six months after her death, he espoused his first cousin Marie-Thérèse, daughter of Ferdinand the Fourth, of Naples, and Marie-Caroline, of Austria, who was a sister of Marie-Antoinette. In less then seventeen years, they had thirteen children. She died in 1807, at the birth of her last child, and nine months later was replaced by the Princess Marie-Louise-Béatrice, who was another cousin, the daughter of the Archduke Ferdinand, one of the younger sons of Maria Theresa. This third wife of the Emperor Francis was the only one whom Napoleon knew.

Of the thirteen children born to Marie-Thérèse, only nine survived their mother. The eldest, Marie-Louise, was born on the 12 December 1791, a few weeks before her father as-

cended the throne. As the eldest child, at the age of two she was given a household of her own, of which the head was a governess, who had full authority over her. This custodian was changed in 1794, and again five years later, when the Comtesse de Colloredo was appointed. She was French by birth, of a provincial family of the minor noblesse, and had married this same year of 1799 the Comte de Colloredo, who occupied a very influential position at the Court. This governess gained the regard and love of her charge, who always called her "maman." Under her supervision, Louise received an excellent education, especially in languages. Besides her native tongue, she spoke fluently, if not very correctly, French, Italian, Spanish, and English. She took lessons on the piano and the harp, and had a complete course in ancient and modern history.

Austria had been the greatest enemy, and also the greatest victim of revolutionary France. Since 1796, she had attacked France four separate times, and on each occasion had been ignominiously vanquished. After each defeat, Francis had lost a part of his dominions: at Campo-Formio, he had given up Lombardy, the Low Countries, and the left bank of the Rhine; at Lunéville, Tuscany, and the balance of Italy; at Presburg, the Venetian States, the Tyrol, and the dignity of Holy Roman Emperor; at Vienna, Galicia, Dalmatia, the city of Trieste, and other small parcels. Three times, he had been forced to flee from his capital; and on the last two occasions he had seen Napoleon established as master in his palaces; his pride had been humiliated, and his choicest possessions torn from him. In 1805, the Emperor was obliged to deprive Colloredo of his charges, and exile him to his estates, for having advocated the war. As his wife had to follow him, by this same blow Louise lost her dear "maman," and the daughter, Victoire, her most intimate friend.

Vienna was the refuge on the Continent of all the adherents of the monarchs and princes driven by the wars from their ancestral estates, and the city was a very hotbed of anti-French sentiment. Francis, a worthy man, but of limited intelligence,

was very much under the influence of these foes of the Revolution; and he was especially susceptible to the domination of his young wife, who detested the French.

Béatrice, born the 14 December 1787, was just four years older than Louise. Until 1796, when he was expelled by Bonaparte, her father had governed Milan for the Emperor, and ruled over two of the smaller States in Italy. He had then taken up his residence in Venice, only to be exiled again after the Peace of Presburg in 1805. Two of his daughters had also been dispossessed by the French: the Queen of Sardinia, and the dowager of the Elector Palatinate of the Rhine. It is not strange, therefore, that he and Béatrice detested France and her Emperor.

Béatrice was slight, and very delicate; but pretty, intelligent, and extremely adroit. Although twenty years younger than her husband, she professed the most ardent love for him, and Francis, from the first, was completely under her influence. He was by nature a most uxorious husband, and wished to have his wife constantly by his side. In an age of lax morals, his private life was irreproachable. He was such a good husband, so strictly faithful, that, in the words of M. Masson, " il en tue ses femmes."[1]

This ascendancy over her husband, Béatrice used for the purpose that she had most at heart: to bring about a war of revenge against France; and she was largely instrumental in deciding the Emperor to take up arms again in 1809. During the first week of the campaign, while Napoleon once more crushed the power of Austria in one of the most brilliant operations of his career, Vienna was elated over false reports of victories. Louise wrote her father: "We have learned with joy that Napoleon was present at the great battle he has lost. May he also lose his head! " But, in place of the reported triumphs, the news soon came that Napoleon was approaching Vienna, and the Court was forced to flee once more. On the 5 May, Béatrice and Louise left Vienna for Bude; but even there they could not remain in safety. After the victory of

[1] Masson, *Marie-Louise*, II.

Eugène at Raab, on the 14 June, they were forced to take refuge at Erlau. The fragile nerves of the Empress were shattered by the agony of defeat, and she was very ill.

All of the letters of Louise at this time are full of hatred for Napoleon, mingled with anxiety over the reports of his approaching divorce, and the rumors that she might be chosen as his bride. After the armistice, the family was once more reunited at Bude, and in January 1810 Louise was still detained there by the illness of her mother. The last of that month she wrote her former governess: "Since the divorce of Napoleon I open every gazette of Frankfort with the idea of finding in it the nomination of the new wife, and I admit that this delay gives me involuntary uneasiness. . . . If misfortune demands it, I am ready to sacrifice my personal happiness for the good of the State . . . Pray that it may not be!"[2] Like a true daughter of Austria, she was ready to submit when the demand came.

The special courier from Paris, bearing the preliminary contract of marriage, signed by Cadore and Schwarzenberg, reached Vienna the middle of February. The following day, Floret arrived from Paris, and handed Metternich a private letter from the ambassador, explaining his action in signing the contract. "If I had insisted on not signing," he wrote, "Napoleon would have broken away, to conclude either with Russia or Saxony. . . . Bring this matter to a noble end, and you will have rendered an immense service to the country." This letter shows that the Emperor had succeeded in concealing from Schwarzenberg the failure of his negotiations with Russia.

At Vienna, the secret had been so well kept, that every one was still ignorant of the proposed marriage except the Emperor, the Empress, the Archduchess, and Metternich. Louise gave her consent with the greatest reluctance. To Metternich she said: "I only wish what my duty commands. When the interests of the Empire are at stake, I must consult them, and

[2] 2 Fournier, 115.

not my desires. Pray my father to obey only his duties as sovereign, and not to subordinate them to my personal interest." When this conversation was reported to the Emperor, he said: " My consent to this marriage will assure to the Monarchy several years of political peace, that I can consecrate to healing its wounds. I am bound to consider the happiness of my people; therefore, I cannot hesitate." These words show conclusively that the pretended reconciliation of the Austrian Court was not sincere, and that the only object of Francis was to gain time. It is strange that Napoleon should have been so completely duped, but he always had an exaggerated idea of the strength of family alliances.

On the 24 February, the marriage was officially announced at Vienna in the *Gazette*. The news was well received in society, and especially in the world of affairs. Comte Otto wrote: " The Empress shows herself extremely favorable to this marriage. . . . On the Bourse, public opinion has pronounced itself in an astonishing manner: in less than two hours there was an advance of thirty per cent. Confidence is reëstablished everywhere."

At this moment an annoying situation arose, which for a moment threatened to postpone the marriage, or even to prevent it entirely. The religious scruples of the Archbishop of Vienna were aroused regarding the validity of Napoleon's divorce, and he declined to perform the ceremony until he was satisfied. The alarm of the French ambassador is shown in a long despatch which he sent to Champagny on the 28 February; and in the letter which he wrote at the same time to Berthier, asking him to defer his arrival at Vienna by a few days.

Napoleon had found unexpected difficulties in having his religious marriage dissolved, and the matter had not been arranged so easily as he had expected. In former times, where there was a question of the divorce of a sovereign, recourse had always been had to the Pope. The marriage of Louis the Twelfth had been dissolved by the Supreme Pontiff, as had also that of Henry the Fourth. On the present occasion, Napoleon knew that it was hopeless for him to apply to Pius the Seventh.

The Pope had been dispossessed of his States, and he was then the prisoner of the Emperor.

Napoleon accordingly referred the matter to the Ecclesiastical Court of Paris, which, he was advised, had jurisdiction. The request for the annulment of his religious marriage to Joséphine was based on three grounds: First, that the ceremony had not been performed by the priest of the parish, as required by the Canonical laws; Second, that no witnesses were present; Third, that Napoleon had been constrained to give his consent.

The first two points were obviously of little weight, as the ceremony had been performed under a special dispensation granted by the Pope himself. The only valid ground, therefore, was that the consent of Napoleon had been forced, by the refusal of the Supreme Pontiff, on the eve of the Coronation, to take part in the ceremony unless the relations of Napoleon and Joséphine, which were plain concubinage in the eyes of the Church, were regulated by a religious marriage. The ceremony had accordingly been performed in the chapel of the Tuileries, by Cardinal Fesch, in the presence of no witnesses, the night before the Coronation.

After hearing the arguments of Cambacérès, the arch-chancellor of the Empire, the Ecclesiastical Court pronounced the marriage null and void, principally on the ground of the non-consent of Napoleon. The decree was transmitted to Comte Otto at Vienna, who announced it to the Emperor Francis, but did not show him the document itself, which was immediately returned to Paris, to be filed in the French Archives. Francis expressed himself as satisfied, the contract was ratified, and the marriage formally announced.

The scruples of the Archbishop were finally removed by a declaration signed by Otto, a copy of which he sent to Paris on the 3 March. He attested over his official signature as ambassador that, " under the Civil laws in force at the time of this marriage, every conjugal union was based on the principle that it could be dissolved at the will of the contracting parties." This was quite true, and fully covered the case of the civil mar-

riage. But he certainly stretched a point when he affirmed that the original decree of the Ecclesiastical Court of Paris, which he had read, stated that, "in conformity with the Catholic Ecclesiastical Laws established in the French Empire, the said marriage had been declared entirely null, because, at the time of the conclusion of this marriage, the most essential formalities required by the laws of the Church had been neglected."

In his letter, forwarding the copy of this remarkable affidavit, Otto practically admitted that he did not think the Archbishop would have yielded if he had read the original decree, and known upon what flimsy grounds the religious divorce was granted! "Finally," he writes in conclusion, "this means has succeeded; and the delay in the arrival of Mgr. le Prince de Neuchâtel prevents the public from even suspecting the existence of this discussion which has given us so much anxiety."

For the position of ambassador extraordinary to Vienna on the occasion of his marriage, the Emperor had selected his chief-of-staff, Marshal Berthier, sovereign prince of Neuchâtel, vice-constable, and grand-huntsman of the Empire. He finally arrived on the 6 March, and was magnificently installed at the Chancellery of the Empire. Those who were inclined to be superstitious found an unfavorable augury for the future in the fact that he had to enter the capital over a temporary bridge built across the ruins of the former city walls, which had been blown up by the French army before evacuating Vienna at the conclusion of peace. The fact that the Emperor gave this order would seem to prove that the thought of the Austrian marriage had not then entered his head.

The following day was Ash Wednesday, and the formal demand of the hand of the Archduchess was postponed until Thursday night. Then there was a solemn audience at the palace. In reply to the demand of the ambassador, the Emperor briefly declared: "I accord the hand of my daughter to the Emperor of the French." Then Marie-Louise entered, and Berthier presented to her a letter from Napoleon, and a medal-

lion portrait surrounded by twelve enormous diamonds. To his address, she replied simply: "With the permission of my father, I give my consent to my union with the Emperor Napoleon."

On Friday, the final marriage contract was executed by Berthier and Metternich, the one signed at Paris having been only preliminary. The terms, based upon the contract of Marie-Antoinette, were as follows: A dot of five hundred thousand francs, the same amount in jewelry given by her father, balanced by six hundred thousand to be given by Napoleon; an annual allowance to be appropriate to her high rank; renunciation on her part of all right of succession in the Austrian dominions.

Finally, the marriage was celebrated on the 11 March, which was a Sunday, the only day on which weddings are permitted during Lent. The procession was met at the door of the Church of the Augustins by the Archbishop of Vienna, who presented the Holy Water. He then returned to the altar, while the Imperial family took their places in the choir. The Archduke Charles, representing the Emperor Napoleon, and the Archduchess Louise then knelt on the prie-Dieu before the high altar. The Archbishop having blessed the marriage rings, presented to him in a cup, Charles and Louise advanced to the altar, where the ceremony was performed in German, according to the Viennese rites. After the exchange of the nuptial rings, Louise took back the one intended for Napoleon, in order to present it to him. Then the *Te Deum* was chanted, and, after the benediction, the procession returned to the palace, while salvos of artillery, and the ringing of all the church bells in the city announced to the people that the ceremony was over.

Following the reception at the Burg, there was a large banquet. At the table, the new Empress of the French was seated in the centre, with the Emperor Francis at her right, and the Empress at her left. Then followed, on the two sides, the seven Archdukes, and the Prince de Neuchâtel. Contrary to the usual etiquette at the Court of Vienna, the French ambassador,

in his capacity of a sovereign prince, was invited to remain until the end of the dinner.[3]

That evening, the city was brilliantly illuminated, and the Emperor and Empress, with the bride, drove through the streets in an open carriage, while all the theatres gave free performances. The sovereigns were wildly cheered by the good people of Vienna; but a high wind soon extinguished nearly all the illuminations — another bad omen!

Marie-Louise passed Monday quietly with her family; and the Emperor Francis seized this occasion to write a first letter to his new son-in-law, and despatch it by his chamberlain, Comte de Clary. At the end he says: "Comte de Metternich, who follows Comte de Clary in a few days, will be charged to express verbally to Your Imperial Majesty the attachment which I have vowed to a prince who, since yesterday, is one of the most precious members of my family. At this moment, I can do no more than to pray him to receive the assurance of my esteem and of my unalterable friendship." In the art of dissimulation, Francis was not much inferior to Napoleon's ally, Alexander!

Early Tuesday morning, the Emperor set out for Linz, where he was to take his final leave of his daughter. An hour later, Marie-Louise began her journey to France. She was accompanied by the Comtesse de Lazansky, grand-mistress of her household, who was expected to remain in France for a year; and a large suite of ladies and gentlemen, under the escort of several squadrons of cavalry.

On Friday morning, Louise reached Altheim, on the frontier, where the ceremony of the *remise* was to take place. As Bavaria was a member of the Confederation of the Rhine, this town was considered French territory; and here the new Empress was to be met by the French mission, who were to escort her to Compiègne.

The formalities were all copied from those observed forty years before on the occasion of the marriage of Marie-Antoi-

[3] Ambassadors, when invited to the table of the sovereign, usually left when the dessert was served.

nette to the Dauphin of France. The Prince de Neuchâtel, who had left Vienna on Monday, was waiting at Altheim, to receive the Empress. The head of the French mission was Napoleon's sister, Caroline, who was certainly a remarkable choice, when we consider that she was occupying the throne of Naples, from which Louise's grandmother Caroline had been driven by the French. She was accompanied by the widow of Marshal Lannes, the Duchesse de Montebello, whom Napoleon had chosen for Louise's chief lady of honor; and a large suite.

At the conclusion of the ceremony of the *remise,* the acts were signed and sealed, the dot was counted, and the inventory of the jewels was verified. Then the members of the French party were presented to their new Empress, and the two missions proceeded to Braunau, under an escort of French troops. Here Marie-Louise was taken in charge by her dame d'Atours, and was shortly dressed from head to foot à la Française. At six-thirty, she dined with Queen Caroline and Mme. Lazansky, while, in another room, the Prince de Neuchâtel and Mme. de Montebello presided over a banquet of seventy couverts given to the members of the two missions.

The following morning, Louise took leave of her Austrian suite, and set out for Strasbourg, where she arrived on the 24 March. At Munich, Queen Caroline, on her own responsibility, dismissed Louise's *dame de compagnie,* Mme. Lazansky, to whom she had taken a great dislike. This was a great grief to the Empress, but she tamely submitted.

In the meantime, on the 20 March Napoleon had left Paris for Compiègne, where he anxiously awaited the arrival of his bride. All the members of the Imperial family had arrived, and everything was ready for the reception of the new Empress. The château had been repaired, and newly decorated and furnished; the gardens had been replanted, and ornamented with statues.

The plans for the meeting with Marie-Louise had been arranged in the most minute detail. She was expected on the 28 March, and that morning the Emperor and his party, with an

escort of the cavalry of the Imperial Guard, were to leave Compiègne for a point midway between the château and Soissons, where a large pavilion had been erected. Here Napoleon and Louise were to see each other for the first time, and then to be escorted back to Compiègne in a State carriage. The Empress was to be installed in the château, and the Emperor was to take up his quarters in the hôtel of the Chancellery.

But, at noon on the 27 March, Napoleon received a letter from Louise, saying that she was hastening her journey, and was leaving Vitry-le-François that same morning for Soissons. On reading this letter, Napoleon could restrain his impatience no longer. He sent for Murat, and they left the park by a side gate, where a small carriage was in waiting, driven by a servant in plain livery. Travelling at full speed, they soon passed Soissons, and reached the relay station in the little village of Courcelles. By this time, it was raining in torrents, and Napoleon and Murat sought shelter under the porch of a church opposite the relay post.

A few minutes later, the travelling coach of the Empress appeared, and drew up at the post-house to change horses. Napoleon rushed to the door of the carriage, entered, and took Louise in his arms. She had been warned of his presence a moment before, by a postilion, who cried, "L'Empereur!"

Directing Caroline and Murat to take the front seat, Napoleon placed himself at the side of Marie-Louise, and ordered the postilions to proceed at full speed to Compiègne. A courier was sent ahead, to announce their arrival for ten o'clock that evening.

As soon as the news reached the château, preparations were made in haste for the reception of the Emperor and the Empress. Marshal Bessières, at the head of the cavalry of the Guard, galloped to the stone bridge, where forty years before Louis the Fifteenth had welcomed the dauphine, Marie-Antoinette.

About nine-thirty, the arrival of the Imperial couple was announced by a salute of one hundred and one guns. The carriage rapidly traversed the avenues, and drew up at the door

of the château, where the Court was assembled at the foot of the grand staircase. Descending first, Napoleon offered his hand to Marie-Louise, whom he conducted to the salon, where he presented to her all of the members of the Court. Then he escorted the Empress to her apartment, where they had supper, with no one present except Queen Caroline.

Meanwhile, the members of the Court were anxiously waiting for the Empress to descend, after completing her toilette. Finally, Bertrand, one of the Emperor's chamberlains, appeared, and announced, "Their Majesties have retired!" Then, as they all went in to supper, he whispered to his wife, "*Ils sont couchés!*"[4]

The following morning, Napoleon said to one of his familiars: "My dear fellow, marry a German girl. They are the best wives in the world — sweet, good, simple, and as fresh as a rose." In comparison with the somewhat faded charms of Joséphine, his new wife appeared to him charming; but, in reality, she was far from being a beauty. She was simply a nice young girl, blonde and fresh, with a rose and white skin, somewhat marked by the smallpox. She had a mass of blond hair; a broad, low forehead; prominent light blue eyes; a nose, flat at the base, heavy and sensual at the end, which gave her something of a Kalmuck look. She had the heavy, pendant, lower lip, characteristic of the House of Austria, and white teeth, separated and somewhat projecting. She was above the average height, five feet six inches, English measure. Her shoulders were heavy, and sloping; her bust fine, but large for a young girl; her legs slender; her hands and feet very small. In fact, she was formed, in part, like one of the nymphs of Rubens; in part, like an undeveloped child. She was timid, ungraceful, and devoid of magnetism. Metternich certainly was flattering, when he said of her: "The new Empress will please Paris, and ought to please it, by her goodness, her great sweetness and simplicity. Plain, rather than pretty, she has a very fine figure, and she will be all right when she is well dressed."

[4] La Tour du Pin, 2 *Journal*, 288.

EMPRESS MARIE-LOUISE

But this immature girl of eighteen had a hard task before her, to "please Paris," as the successor of the fascinating Joséphine, who "won all hearts."

Two days after the arrival of the Empress, the Court left Compiègne for Saint-Cloud. There, on Sunday, the first of April, the civil marriage of Napoleon took place, the arch-chancellor officiating. All the members of the Bonaparte family were present, except King Joseph, who was detained in Spain.

The following day, the religious marriage was celebrated at Paris. The Emperor and Empress drove to the city in the celebrated carriage of the Coronation. Four marshals of France, the colonel-generals of the Guard, rode beside the doors, and the escort was composed of several squadrons of cavalry. Descending the avenue of the Champs-Élysées, and traversing the Place de la Concorde, the procession arrived at the Tuileries by way of the Gardens. The Emperor and Empress, followed by their suite, mounted the grand staircase to the Salle des Maréchaux, traversed the State apartments, and the long gallery of the Louvre, to the Salon Carré, which had been turned into a chapel for the occasion. The altar was at the eastern end of the room, adjoining the Gallery of Apollo, and tribunes had been erected on the three other sides of the salon. Thirty feet in front of the altar, upon a platform and under a dais, two arm-chairs and two prie-Dieu had been placed for the Emperor and Empress. Here, Napoleon and Marie-Louise took their seats, the Emperor on the right. On his side were placed the princes of the family, and on the side of the Empress, all the princesses, in the order of their rank. The ceremony was performed by Napoleon's uncle, the grand-almoner, Cardinal Fesch.[5]

The day was marred by one unfortunate *contretemps:* the absence from the ceremony of the thirteen Italian cardinals. When all the great bodies of the State came to the Tuileries the next day, to present their homages to the Emperor and Em-

[5] By a curious error, the certificate of the marriage, signed by Cardinal Fesch, and deposited in the French Archives, gives as the date, "the *first* day of April, *first Sunday* in Lent" — both facts incorrect!

press, Napoleon showed his resentment by refusing to receive these thirteen prelates. In vain they wrote a very contrite joint letter, in which they declared that they had never presumed either to pass judgment on the first marriage of the Emperor, or to raise doubts as to the validity of the second. They were deprived of their charges, and interned in different cities of France, where they lived on the charity of the faithful. Forbidden to wear their red robes, and forced to don the costumes of ordinary priests, they were subsequently called the "black cardinals."[6]

The wedding ceremony was followed by a grand parade of the Imperial Guard, in the court of the Tuileries, which the Emperor and Empress reviewed from the balcony of the Salle des Maréchaux. In the evening, there was a large banquet, served in the theatre of the château, followed by a concert, and a grand display of fireworks, in the Gardens and the entire length of the Champs-Élysées.

The time of Marie-Louise, as Empress, was divided almost equally between the Tuileries, where she passed her winters, and Saint-Cloud, where she spent her summers. Her life was as quiet and uneventful as that which she had led as a young girl, in the Burg, at Vienna, or at Schönbrunn, but with an entire absence of the intimate family associations to which she had been accustomed. Her days passed with the monotony of a convent, and she had no more liberty than a nun. Unlike Joséphine, she loved to read, and spent much time with her books, which were mainly of a serious or instructive character. Her library, selected by herself, shows the tendency of her mind, and does her credit. She wrote French much better than she spoke it, as she could never overcome her strong German accent. Her instruction, without being very profound, was extended and varied. She had a good knowledge of geography, natural history, and history — particularly of the present and former possessions of the House of Austria.

Like Joséphine, she was very fond of flowers, but she did

[6] Artaud, 258.

not possess the magnificent gardens and hothouses which were the glory of Malmaison. She took lessons in painting from Isabey and Prud'hon; but, as Napoleon could not bear the odor of oils, she soon gave them up, and confined herself to water-colors and crayons. She was equally interested in music, and her private apartments, in all the Imperial palaces, were provided by order of the Emperor with a piano and a harp, always of Viennese manufacture. Her taste in music was excellent, and she had in her collection all of the French, Italian, and German classics. She was also fond of needle-work, and had a teacher in embroidery. But, with all these distractions, her time was not fully occupied, and she had in her rooms every kind of game imaginable: cards, dominoes, checkers, backgammon, and so forth.

As a young girl at Vienna, like her aunt, Marie-Antoinette, Marie-Louise had not been allowed to ride, and she was very anxious to learn. As this met with the approval of the Emperor, she took her first lessons in the riding-school at Saint-Cloud, soon after her marriage. After that, she rode with the Emperor, at Saint-Cloud, Compiègne, and Fontainebleau; and, at Paris, followed the hunt with him in the Bois, or rode for exercise in the Park of Mousseau.[7] When Napoleon was absent, she rode with Mme. de Montebello. This was her only exercise, at Paris, as there were no promenades, except the reserved terrace of the Gardens of the Tuileries, and the small park of the Élysée, after the Emperor recovered it from Joséphine, in exchange for Laeken.

Such in brief was the daily life of the Empress, about as narrow and confined as that of a young girl in a convent. She could not receive any one without the approval of the Emperor; she could not write freely even to the members of her family, because she knew that all her correspondence passed under the eyes of the *Cabinet noir*.

[7] Now known as the Parc Monceau. This park, which was formerly double its present size, was laid out in 1778 by Philippe d'Orléans, Duc de Chartres (Égalité), the father of King Louis-Philippe. Prior to the Revolution, Mousseau was called by the Parisians the *Folies de Chartres*. (Cain, *Nouvelles Promenades dans Paris*, 319–331.)

The character of Marie-Louise was naturally weak: she had always had some one to lean upon, to direct her; and this was to be her fate throughout life. At Paris, she quickly came under the influence of the dominating personality of Mme. de Montebello, and it was her dame d'honneur who directed her thoughts and actions during the frequent absences of the Emperor. This lady had deliberately set out, from the first, to gain the favor of the Empress, of which she calculated the advantages. It was she who, at Braunau, instigated Caroline to send back Mme. Lazanksy, and by this stroke aroused the resentment of Marie-Louise against her sister-in-law. Jealous of her influence, she endeavored, not only to prevent Marie-Louise from forming other friendships, but to turn her even against the Emperor. Napoleon soon realized that he had made a mistake in the selection of the lady of honor, but he could not dismiss her without causing a scandal which would reflect upon the glorious memory of his old companion-in-arms, Marshal Lannes.

CHAPTER TWENTY-EIGHT

MAY 1808 — DECEMBER 1810

THE EXODUS OF LUCIEN

Joy of the Bonapartes over the Divorce — Their Hopes that Napoleon Would Marry His Niece — Lucien's Sentiments — He Applies for Passports to America — Madame Asks for Lolotte — Lucien Refuses — His Life at Canino — Birth of Paul — Lucien Sends Campi to Paris — Napoleon Refers the Negotiations to Jérôme — Lucien Makes Campi His Ambassador — His Interview with the Emperor — He Is Sent to Bring Lolotte — Lucien's Feelings — Offers to Alexandrine — Her Refusal — Lolotte Arrives in Paris — Campi's Second Audience — The Entire Family Turns Against Lucien — Campi's Report to Lucien — Lolotte Presented to the Emperor — Campi Again Sees the Emperor, and Departs for Canino — Lucien Sends for Lolotte, and Prepares to Leave — He Sails for Sardinia — He Is Arrested by the English — Conducted to Malta, and Later to Plymouth — The News at Paris — Action of the Emperor — His Chagrin and Regret

FOR fourteen years, the Bonaparte clan had waged against Joséphine a ruthless warfare, in which they had not scrupled to resort to every possible means to bring about her downfall. If they had not been able to endure Joséphine, who was the least resentful and the least treacherous of women, it was primarily because only a woman of their country and their race would have found favor in their eyes, and satisfied them. They had all remained Corsicans to the bottom of their souls — not only the mother and the uncle, but all of the daughters. When they had finally succeeded in driving Joséphine from the family, the sole marriage which would have pleased them would have been between Napoleon and one of his nieces, of whom only one was then sufficiently mature — Charlotte, the eldest daughter of Lucien.[1] This happy solution had been rendered impossible by Lucien's refusal to send Lolotte to Paris.

[1] She was born the 22 February 1795, and was nearly fifteen years of age at the time of the divorce.

Since his celebrated interview with Lucien, at Mantua in December 1807, Napoleon had had no direct negotiations with his brother; but other members of the family, through their desire to bring about a reconciliation, had made promises, and imagined combinations, which had only served to flatter his vanity, and make him more stubborn. He sincerely believed that Napoleon owed to him the success of the 18 Brumaire, which led directly to the Consulate and the Empire; and that, in accepting a throne, he was conferring a favor, rather than receiving a benefit.

After his long conference with Joseph, at Bologna in May 1808, Lucien is reported to have said to a confidential agent of Jérôme, that he had not given up his idea of leaving Europe, as he did not anticipate that the Emperor would make him any proposition that he could accept. To prove that this was not a vain threat, on his return to Florence (30 May), he wrote Mr. Hill, the English minister at Cagliari, Sardinia, requesting him to send passports, as he was on the point of sailing with his family for New York.

Without consulting his Government, Hill seized this occasion to increase the discord in the Bonaparte family, and promptly sent the passports. Lucien, however, had no intention of leaving, and was in daily expectation of the arrival of a courier from Bayonne, bringing him the offer of a crown.

The middle of July, a courier arrived, bearing, not a crown, but a letter from Madame, urging him to send Lolotte to Paris, and holding out hopes of her "establishment." As his mother did not enter into any explanations, it is impossible to state what connection she had in mind. It certainly was no longer the Prince of the Asturias, now an exile in France. M. Masson surmises that Madame, of her own thought, or as the result of a hint that she had received, wished to have her granddaughter at hand, to offer to Napoleon at the propitious moment.[2]

Lucien again refused to send his daughter; but two months

[2] 5 Masson, 45.

later, he wrote his mother, requesting her to present his demand once more to the Emperor for passports to the United States. Madame replied that she was unable to see the Emperor before his departure for Erfurt; and that, besides, she did not believe his request would be granted. She advised Lucien to abandon his plan, or await a more favorable moment, and in the meantime to remain in Tuscany. He accepted this suggestion, in part, as he really had no intention of leaving at this time.

Lucien then took up his residence at Canino, where he began to make great improvements in his property. In turning up the earth, to cultivate his estate, he found that the surface covered the remains of three ancient civilizations. On the first excavations, he found statues, urns, Etruscan vases, of the greatest antiquity, and of almost priceless value. He wrote his mother, to express his satisfaction, and also to announce the early arrival of a seventh child. In fact, on the 3 November 1808, Alexandrine presented him with a son, who was named Paul-Marie,[3] in honor of the pope Paul the Third, who was said to have been born (1468) in this same château of Canino.

Lucien spent the winter on his estate, where he was occupied with repairing the château, and the tearing down of other buildings which obstructed his view. At this time, he bought thirty ploughs, two hundred oxen, and several thousand sheep. For his forges and foundries he brought artisans and workmen from every part of Italy. He even acquired a fleet of boats, to bring his ores from Elba.

While the fate of Europe was being decided in the valley of the Danube, Lucien was engrossed in the affairs of his immense property. He had expended a great deal of money, for which he could not expect a quick return, and he was once more embarrassed. So, in November 1809, he again appealed to the Emperor.

At this moment, there appeared at Canino a man by the

[3] Paul was killed, in 1827, by the accidental discharge of a pistol, while he was serving on Lord Cochrane's battleship, during the Greek War of Independence.

name of Campi,[4] a Corsican who, for many years, had been mixed up with the affairs of the Bonapartes. In the expectation that the divorce would soon be announced he had been sent by Madame, Fesch, and Pauline, to urge Lucien to send at once to Paris his two daughters by his first marriage, Lolotte and Lili.[5]

In his reply, under date of the 6 December, to the letter of Fesch, Lucien shows great curiosity regarding the allowance made by the Emperor to Miss Patterson, but makes no allusion to Lolotte, whose arrival was looked for by Madame, Pauline, and the cardinal, "with the greatest impatience." The Emperor was about to announce his divorce; Louis was expected to obtain a separation from his wife: all was over with Joséphine and Hortense. In another letter (12 December) from Madame she begs Lucien to take advantage of this fine opportunity to reconquer Napoleon from the Beauharnais.

On the 18 December, two envoys from Lucien appeared at the hôtel of Madame in Paris: these were, Campi, returned from Canino, and Boyer, a brother of Lucien's first wife, who occupied the position of secretary and general factotum with the "Senator." In reply to the questions of Madame and Fesch, they explained that Lucien had not sent Lolotte, because the Emperor had asked for the *two* girls, and that he was not willing to send his daughters until he knew exactly what were the family plans. "M. Lucien," declared Boyer, "has charged me to tell you that, if he ever gives up his private life, it will be a sacrifice on his part, to prove his attachment to the Family; but that the ties which he has formed can be dissolved only by death." With this statement, the conference was adjourned.

It was nearly ten days before Madame found the courage to speak to the Emperor; but she finally brought the matter up on the 26 December, at the first family dinner after Napoleon's

[4] He was the former secretary-general of the department of the Liamone; had been with Lucien when he was Minister of the Interior, and also during his embassy to Madrid.

[5] The names by which Charlotte and Christine-Égypta were known in the family. (See Biographical Notes.)

return from the Trianon. He made no reply, but called Jérôme to one side, and directed him to arrange the affair.

The following day, Jérôme sent for the two envoys, and explained to them the intentions of the Emperor: That he was willing to have Lolotte come, without Lili, and the sooner the better; that he would never recognize the legitimacy of the eldest son of Lucien, born out of wedlock; that there would be no difficulty regarding the other children.

When Boyer suggested that the terms should be put in writing, so that Lucien might know directly and positively the intentions of the Emperor, Jérôme replied that he could not do this without consulting Napoleon; and so the meeting ended. If Jérôme spoke to the Emperor, there is no record on the subject.

Through the delay of Lucien in sending his daughter, and the haste of Austria in offering her Archduchess, the family hopes for a marriage between Napoleon and his niece had now become impossible of realization. The question of the arrival of Lolotte therefore became of secondary importance, and the plans for some arrangement with Lucien took first place. On the 2 January 1810, Pauline wrote Lucien: "I have spoken to the Emperor, and Maman will give you an account of what he said . . ." Madame, indeed, wrote; but without entering into any particulars on the subject of Alexandrine and her children, affirming solely that the Emperor wished for an understanding, and would do everything to make it possible. Lucien, satisfied that he had won his cause, and that Napoleon would recognize his marriage, responded with some positive advances. He wrote Madame, to attest his desire to serve the Emperor; he also wrote Napoleon direct, to ask permission to conduct his daughter to Paris. Finally, he sent his instructions to Campi, whom he accredited as his ambassador.

On the 3 February, the Emperor sent for Campi, and had a long talk with him.[6] Napoleon repeated what he had said on many previous occasions, that he would never receive Mme. Jouberthou as a sister. "If she loves Lucien, if she loves her

[6] See 5 Masson, 60–66.

children, she herself will press Lucien to secure a divorce. . . . In case of a divorce, the children are recognized. There is only one who is illegitimate." In reply to the observation of Campi that the husband had died fourteen months before the birth of the child, the Emperor said: "That is a thing to prove. He was born before their marriage, which is contrary to our customs."

Campi then begged the Emperor to allow Lucien to come to Paris, in order to have a personal explanation. "No!" replied Napoleon. "I have not forgotten the interview at Mantua, where he dared to tell me that he did not love the French: that aroused my indignation. He could take this stand with Joseph between themselves, but not with the Emperor of the French. He who does not love the French is my enemy; he can go and join the English."

"If Your Majesty does not wish M. Lucien to come to Paris," said Campi, "you can write him, and I will carry your orders."

"I cannot write him," declared the Emperor. "You are the friend of Lucien, he will believe you; you have no reason to conceal the truth from him. Tell him that, when the interests of the world are at stake, one must renounce family affections. Such sacrifices are necessary. Take the case of the Empress: for many years, I had lived with her; I was used to her; I loved her; at my age, I should not have considered another wife. My situation demanded that I separate myself from her: I have done it. Lucien is the cause of this divorce. His stubbornness has made me think of the future: I have conceived the hope of leaving heirs who will not trouble my heritage. I have consulted only the welfare of my people. The Empress has been the victim of my politics. As such, I will take care of her. I never abandon the victims of my politics. Consider the first wife of Jérôme: she was deceived; she wrote me so; I am giving her twenty thousand crowns, and will make her forget her misfortune. If Lucien secures a divorce, I shall see in his wife only a victim of my system, and I shall look out for her welfare. I do not tell you all that I will do for her. If she wishes to go to America, I will give her the means to go there, and to live there honorably. If she desires to remain at Rome,

she has my consent. I will freely give her everything which can make her existence happy. Lucien tells me that she is a good mother: I shall soon know if this is the fact."

Finally, returning to the question of Lolotte, Napoleon said that Lucien had made a mistake in not sending her the previous year; and he told Campi to go, and bring her to Paris. "Leave with Mme. Gasson," he said; "go and get Lolotte, and return with her. Deliver her to Madame, and she will present her to me."

Campi then asked, if he could assure Lucien that the Emperor would take care of Lolotte. To this question, Napoleon replied that, if Lucien assumed his rank, Lolotte would become a princess; if no understanding were reached, she would be well treated. Campi explained that, if he had asked this question, it was because Madame had told him that she did not know how she could take care of Lolotte, in case she came. "Did Maman tell you that?" said Napoleon, in a tone of vexation; "Maman will do her duty. Always her avarice! Go and tell Lucien what you have heard. Try to join him before he reaches Turin. Upon your return, I shall know whether I should treat him as a brother or as an enemy."

Campi accordingly left Paris with this Mme. Gasson, who was a daughter of André Boyer, the brother of Lucien's first wife, and therefore a cousin of Lolotte. They travelled rapidly, but did not encounter Lucien at Turin, or elsewhere, en route for Paris. They found him still at Canino, whence he had not set out, in spite of his letters.

They reached Canino about the middle of February, and Campi reported to Lucien his conversation with Madame and with the Emperor, in the most minute detail, for he was careful to record everything, after each conference. "I am most unfortunate," said Lucien; "Maman has then misled me, in writing that the Emperor no longer insisted upon the divorce. The order which you bring me destroys all my hopes: it recalls the interview at Mantua. The Emperor told me then that a time would come when I could no longer live in Europe. I feel myself that that moment has arrived. I am grieved that I can-

not make the sacrifice which the Emperor demands of me. I cannot, honorably, divorce a wife who has borne me four children. I will leave for America. The favor that I ask is, that my departure be taken without publicity, and without the appearance of a dismissal. The Emperor says that he will have a vessel ready at Naples; I should like to have it come to Civita-Vecchia. There, I shall embark quietly as soon as you have brought me my passports. I should not like, at the moment of leaving Europe, to traverse the States of Murat. But what means of existence have I? I have none outside of Europe. Upon the advice of Madame, I have invested in lands all the money I had left. I shall deem myself happy, if the Emperor is willing to take over my property and allow me a pension. In this case, no one can say that my journey is forced."

Lucien said further, that it was not just that the children of his first wife should share his exile. Lolotte could return with Campi to Paris, and he would send Lili later.

"If the Emperor refuses to accord me a pension," he said in conclusion, "I shall be unhappy, but I shall obey. In that case, you will take charge of my affairs, and you will send me all that you can each year."

The negotiations with Lucien had thus failed; but it remained for Campi to make some approaches secretly to Alexandrine, as ordered by the Emperor, to ascertain "if this woman really loves her husband and her children." Taking advantage of the temporary absence of Lucien, Campi offered her, as the price of her divorce, a sovereign position — perhaps the duchy of Parma. She might have replied verbally to this verbal proposition, but she had a mania for writing letters; so she sent the Emperor a long communication.[7] In a word, her answer was that neither the duchy of Parma, nor any other sovereignty, would compensate her for the loss of "the love, the esteem, and the confidence of the most generous of men." Her letter was, in turn, aggressive and supplicating. She was so accustomed to exercising her domination over Lucien, that she

[7] Quoted in full, 5 Masson, 69–72.

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may have thought that Napoleon would be conquered by her literary genius and her beauty. Had she not stated that Napoleon persecuted her, because she had once refused his propositions?

The last of February, Lolotte, under the escort of Campi and Mme. Gasson, set out for Paris, where she arrived on the 8 March. "As soon as her toilette will permit," wrote Madame to Lucien, that same day, "I shall conduct her to the Emperor, and I am persuaded in advance that she will be well received. Please Heaven that I may be able to announce to you at the same time the only thing lacking to my happiness — your reconciliation."

On the 9 March, the Emperor gave an audience to Campi, who handed him the letter from Alexandrine. "This woman has then written me; it was about time," said the Emperor. "I bear her no ill-will; I have nothing against her except my politics. How about Lucien?" Campi produced the letter from Lucien, refusing the divorce. "Well!" said Napoleon, "our affairs are terminated. Then why did Maman and Fesch come here yesterday, to tell me that Lucien would obtain a divorce?" Campi replied that he could not explain. "Madame Mère and the cardinal told me on my arrival," he said, "that Your Majesty no longer insisted on the divorce. I know the contrary. It is thus, for a year past, that M. Lucien has been misled by his own relatives."

"My family then have deceived both Lucien and myself," said the Emperor. . . . "The heavens may fall, but I shall not change. I have said the same thing from the first. The wife of Lucien cannot be my sister-in-law. I said this to you before your departure; I repeat it."

Then, for more than two hours, in a familiar and friendly tone, the Emperor questioned Campi regarding his talks with Lucien; and finally reviewed the whole situation, in a detached manner, as though the subject no longer held any personal interest for him. He also asked Campi about the wife: he wished to know what kind of woman she was, and what she was worth.

Toward the end of the interview, Campi raised the question

of the passports. "He asked them once from the English," replied the Emperor. "Let him demand them again in the same place. I know of his correspondence with my enemies. Besides, you know, I do not sign passports. Let him address the minister: the matter will follow the usual course. . . . I shall have nothing to do with his departure."

Then the Emperor asked some questions about Lolotte: "What kind of girl is she? Is she educated? Has she a good character? Does she know anything about the family quarrels?" In conclusion, he said that his mother was to bring Lolotte to see him that evening; and that he should decide later what to do with her: "Lolotte will not be a princess until I have declared her such. If Lucien does not come to an understanding, I cannot give a king to Lolotte. . . . The branch of Lucien will be cut off for all time: it will not be the only example in history." And with that, he dismissed Campi.

On leaving the Tuileries, Campi rushed to the Hôtel de Brienne, where he was thunderstruck to learn that Madame, formerly so warm an advocate of Lucien, had turned against him, and with her, Fesch, Pauline, and the entire Family. "Let Lucien come before the Emperor's marriage," said Madame; "all the Family will be reunited; the moment could not be more favorable . . . I am sure that if Lucien secures a divorce he will have everything he wants; and, if he does not do it, he is lost for ever. . . . But he must come with the intention of saying to the Emperor: 'Sire, since you recognize my children, do with me as you please.' If Lucien does not take advantage of this opportunity, I shall feel myself that he has become the enemy of the Family, or that he has lost his mind."

Leaving Madame, Campi mounted to the apartment of Louis, in whom he thought to find an ally; but he was surprised to learn that Louis, also, had changed his point of view. "Formerly," he said, "they wanted to annul the marriage, which would make his children bastards. Now, the Emperor demands a divorce; by the divorce, the marriage is recognized, and the children are made legitimate; I no longer see any reason for

resisting the Emperor. Politics have constrained the Emperor to secure a divorce, because he had no children; politics and good sense command Lucien to obtain a divorce, in order to have his children recognized."

"I feel sure," he continued, "that the Emperor desires his marriage to be the moment of the reunion of the Family; but I am also certain that this wish will never carry him to the point of acknowledging the wife of Lucien. He has explained himself too clearly on this subject. It is necessary then that Lucien, for the welfare of his children, for the happiness of us all, shall make this sacrifice which is demanded of him. . . . Lucien thinks, perhaps, that there is glory in resisting the Emperor: it is the glory of our enemies; our own glory is to be united. I desire sincerely to have Lucien share these sentiments: I shall write him to that effect, and shall hope to embrace him at an early date."

This was a remarkable statement, to come from the King of Holland; but we must remember that Louis had a good mind, and could always be sagacious, except when his own personal affairs were in question. Campi could no longer look for any support in the Family. So he forwarded to Canino, by the same courier, the letters handed him by Madame, Fesch, Louis, and Pauline; to which he joined one from himself.

"It follows from what I am sending you," he said: "(1) That you cannot live in Europe without entering the system of the Emperor; (2) that you cannot pass to America without incurring the penalty of deportation. . . . The Emperor is determined to place you beside him, or to ruin you. I am convinced of this fact. Your mother and the cardinal, who formerly wrote you in a kindly spirit, no longer talk except in the vein of the Emperor. All of them see safety, both for themselves and for you, only in entire submission to the will of the Emperor. . . . Make your decision as soon as possible, and in a loyal manner."

The courier also carried a letter from Madame to Alexandrine, begging her to sacrifice herself for her children. She ended with the words: "Finally, if you have some considera-

tion for a mother who, at all times, has known how to sacrifice herself for her children, you will do this also for me, and I assure you that I shall not forget it as long as I live."

That same evening, Madame presented Lolotte to the Emperor. The young girl made a good impression: she resembled the Bonapartes, and promised to be pretty. She was cordially received by the Emperor, but only as his niece; and he did not give her the title of princess. Madame followed the example of Napoleon, but Louis gave orders to his household "to regard Lolotte as a princess, and to address her as *Madame*." This gave new hopes to Lucien, when he heard of it; and in future he addressed his letters *à la Princesse Lolotte*.

On the 29 March, Campi received the reply of Lucien, which was negative. He renewed his proposition to accept a position which was not hereditary; and, in default of that, demanded his passports. Campi read the letter to Madame, who was both grieved and indignant. "A father and a mother who do not know how to sacrifice themselves for their children do not deserve the name," she said. But, with the tenacity of her race, and her mother's love, she did not yet despair. She begged Campi to go to Canino, and bear her last orders and final prayer to her son. The envoy refused, as his orders from Lucien were peremptory; and he left for Compiègne, to see the Emperor. The moment was not propitious, as Napoleon was in the first delights of his honeymoon, and was giving no audiences. Therefore, Campi was not able to see the Emperor until the 10 April. Then Napoleon said that Lucien's proposition was "absurd"; and he refused once more to have anything to do with his passports or his departure.

Campi returned to Paris, to give his report to Madame and Fesch, and then set out for Canino on the 12 April, charged with a last, pathetic appeal from Madame to her favorite son.[8] This letter failed to change the resolution of Lucien: his mind was made up, and nothing could move him from his position.

[8] Quoted, 5 Masson, 91.

It is a curious fact that all of these protracted negotiations between Napoleon and Lucien failed because neither party had any confidence in the sincerity or good faith of the other. With his colossal egotism, Lucien felt that the Emperor could not afford to dispense with his invaluable services, and in the end must yield. On the other hand, Napoleon could not imagine that any man — least of all a Bonaparte — would refuse a crown for purely sentimental reasons; therefore, sooner or later, his brother would come to terms.

Lucien at once began to make his plans for departure, and, at the same time, wrote his mother (21 May) to demand the return of his daughter. Without giving Madame time to reply, a week later (29 May), he despatched Campi to Paris, to bring back Lolotte, and his passports. The letter which Campi bore was a declaration of war on the entire Family. He claimed that they all, including the Emperor, owed their grandeurs to him; and now they wanted to treat him like a "prodigal son." His letter was violent and insolent to the last degree, as if he thought that he might obtain through fear, what he could not get by courtesy.

The passports which Lucien demanded were issued by the Minister of Police, the first of June, in two forms: one in his own name, and the other in the name of "M. Fabrizi, merchant"; in both, Alexandrine was designated by the words, "Madame, his wife." Yet Lucien has had the effrontery to write in his memoirs that the passports of his wife, "the mother of his five children," were issued "*in the name of her first husband!!!*"

There was no trouble about the return of Lolotte: both the Emperor and Madame were tired of her. She had written her father and her stepmother most indiscreet letters, in which she made fun of all the members of the Imperial family. Of course her correspondence was opened by the Black Cabinet, and copies of her letters were sent to the Emperor. Her journal, in which she recorded all of her impressions, was "suppressed."

She left for Italy on the 4 June, under the escort of Mme. Gasson, before Campi had time to reach Paris. She was sent back by the Emperor — not recalled by Lucien; but her father welcomed her arrival with joy, and Lolotte herself seemed glad to return. "Ah! my dear little Papa," she cried, "how wise you are, not to wish to go up there. I am sure that America would be much better!"

Lucien now began in earnest to make his preparations for departure. As he was short of funds, he raised money by borrowing on his real estate, his pictures, and his securities, which put all of his possessions beyond the danger of confiscation. He intended at first to take his jewels, but in the end was forced to sell them, as his affairs did not turn out well.

In order to give credit to the report that he was going to Corsica, Lucien selected a Corsican in his employ, by the name of Tavera, and sent him to Civita to secure a Corsican vessel. Tavera finally chartered a small boat and sailed ostensibly for Corsica. In reality, he was the bearer of two letters from Lucien, under date of the 16 June, addressed, the one, to the commander of the British cruiser off Civita; the other, to the English minister at Cagliari. Lucien requested the renewal of the passports for the United States delivered to him in 1808; also the escort of a British warship as far as Gibraltar.

After a long absence, of nearly three weeks, Tavera returned (13 July) with a reply from the English minister. Hill stated that his action, in delivering passports two years before, had been disapproved by his Government, and he could not renew them.

This was a great blow to Lucien, who was ready to sail, not on the miserable little Corsican boat, but on a fine American three-master, the *Hercules*, which Murat had chartered for him at Naples, and which was expected to arrive at Civita in a few days. On the 21 July, the vessel entered the port: it was under the command of Captain Edward West, of Salem, and had a crew of seventeen men. On the 7 August, Lucien embarked

with his entire family: his wife, his six children, his wife's daughter by her first marriage, his nephew, André Boyer, and a small suite, comprising a secretary, a physician, an almoner, a tutor, and a painter.

At the outset, the weather was fine; but, on the second day, a storm arose, and every one suffered from *mal de mer*. This served as a pretext for taking refuge at Cagliari, where it had always been the intention of Lucien to go. His request to land was refused by the King of Sardinia, and he was again informed by Mr. Hill that passports would not be issued to him. An English frigate, the *Pomone,* dropped anchor alongside the *Hercules,* and Lucien was already, in fact, a prisoner of Great Britain.

On the morning of the 14 August, there arrived in the port another British vessel, the *Salsette,* having on board Sir Robert Adair, the English ambassador to Constantinople. Adair went to see Lucien, at the quarantine hospital, where he had been allowed to land, and informed him that he could not be permitted to proceed to America. Two days later, after the departure of Adair, Hill notified Lucien that he would be sent to Malta, under the escort of the *Pomone.* After numerous conferences, which failed to change the situation, on the 22 August Lucien set sail. The *Pomone* followed, and fired a shot across the bows of the *Hercules,* as soon as the ship was two miles from Cagliari. The American captain stopped, and the lieutenant of the *Pomone* came on board. In the name of the King of Great Britain, he declared Lucien a prisoner. Some marines were put on board, and the two ships proceeded to Malta, where they arrived on the 24 August.

In November, Lucien received, from the Marquis of Wellesley,[9] replies to his letters to the English Government, written the 15 August from Cagliari, and the 27th from Malta. He was informed that he could not remain at Malta, but would be received in England "upon his parole, and under such rules as the particular nature of his situation would seem to exact."

[9] The English foreign secretary. He was the elder brother of the Duke of Wellington.

On the 6 November, the frigate *President* [10] arrived, under the command of Sir H. Oakes, and Lucien was invited to embark. He protested that his wife and children could not endure a winter voyage, but was finally persuaded to embark. The vessel sailed on the 20 November, and reached Plymouth three weeks later (12 December).

The first news of the departure of Lucien, his arrest, and internment at Malta, did not reach Paris until about the 10 October. Napoleon was much chagrined; and he was also profoundly wounded by the comments in the English journals. After many conferences with Cambacérès, the Emperor ordered Lucien's name struck from the list of Senators, also from the rolls of the Légion d'honneur. Further measures were considered, but were postponed until the receipt of later news.

[10] This was a former French frigate, captured by the English in 1806, and incorporated in the British Navy under the original French name.

CHAPTER TWENTY-NINE

DECEMBER 1809 — APRIL 1810

THE TREATY WITH LOUIS

Napoleon's Long Negotiations with Louis — Difficulty in Following His Ideas — Louis's Instructions to His Ministers — His Object in Coming to Paris — He Stops at the Hôtel de Brienne — His Interviews with the Emperor — Napoleon Announces His Intention to Annex Part of Holland — Louis's Propositions to Champagny — His Plans to Return to Holland — Another Audience with the Empéror — Louis Formally Asks for a Separation — His Demand Refused — Napoleon States His Terms for a Treaty — Louis Accepts All — He Still Continues to Quibble — Napoleon Organizes the Army of Brabant — The Southern Provinces Occupied — Illness of Louis — Napoleon Modifies His Demands — His Reasons — Terms of the Treaty — Louis Agrees to the Return of Hortense — His Final Audience — He Arrives at Amsterdam

IT WOULD be giving a very incomplete idea, however, of the activities of Napoleon, during this eventful winter of 1809–1810, to represent that he was entirely occupied with the negotiations for his marriage, and the long discussions with the envoys of Lucien. During the four months following the arrival of Louis in Paris, on the first of December, the Emperor devoted much time to an effort to arrive at an amicable understanding with his brother regarding the future status of Holland. At the same moment that, at the southern extremity of the Grand-Empire, one of the Bonaparte brothers was forced to leave the Continent, because he was unwilling to obey the despotic commands of the Emperor, at the northern limits another brother, the King of Holland, was so harshly treated that, in the end, he was constrained to abdicate his crown, and flee his kingdom, in order to free himself from the Imperial domination.

Although there were some curious points of resemblance between the two quarrels, there was absolutely no concert of ac-

tion between the two brothers: in fact, as we have already seen, Louis supported the Emperor in his stand regarding Lucien, and strongly advised his brother to submit. The main point of similarity between the two cases was that, in both, Napoleon adopted practically the same course of procedure, modified only by the difference in the personality of Louis, and his closer relations to this younger brother. In the first instance, Napoleon was dealing with a resolute man, of strong character, who had frequently defied his authority; in the second, with an invalid, who had never found the courage to resist him, when they were face to face. In the affair of Lucien, except as complicated by the meddling of Madame and Fesch, the course of Napoleon was clear and consistent; in the case of Louis, his policy was confused, and often underhanded; and it is not always easy to follow his train of thought.

Before leaving Holland, Louis had several conferences with his ministers; and his views regarding the question of annexation are expressed in two passages from his writings. "There were two possible courses of action," he says: "either to undertake a hopeless combat . . . against the Power which had caused to tremble Austria, Russia, and England, and almost destroyed Prussia in a day; or to endeavor to prolong a painful existence in yielding to the unavoidable." Again, he writes: "It was necessary to form an alliance with England, . . . or to be resigned to all that might happen, and gain time." It was the second course which he adopted, either because his feeble character recoiled before an energetic resolution, or because the negotiations, which he had probably begun with England, had not yet met with any success.

Prior to his departure, Louis gave formal instructions to his ministers, to whom he confided the government during his absence, that they were to protest against the occupation of any of the strong-places of the kingdom; but to offer only a passive resistance, pending the receipt of instructions from himself. And he had so little confidence in his own powers of resistance to the will of the Emperor, that he arranged a secret code by

which to validate, or invalidate, any orders that he might send! They were to pay no attention to any commands, unless signed by the Holland form of his name — *Lodewijk* — and accompanied by certain cabalistic words in the national language.

Under the circumstances, it is not easy to understand why Louis solicited permission to come to Paris. His chance of obtaining concessions from the Emperor was much greater at Amsterdam than at Paris. The probable explanation is, that his hatred of Hortense was greater than his love of Holland; and he thought that the occasion of Napoleon's divorce would be a favorable time to secure permission for a formal separation from his wife, as divorce was not allowed in the case of the Imperial princes.

As an indication of his intentions, Louis had notified Jérôme, who was already at Paris, that he proposed to take up his residence at the hôtel of his ambassador. Jérôme consulted the Emperor, and sent directions to Louis, before his arrival, that, to avoid a scandal, he was expected to lodge at the residence of the Queen, Rue Cerutti. On the receipt of these instructions, Louis changed his plans, and aggravated the situation by going to the Hôtel de Brienne, the home of his mother. As his suite, in addition to his Minister of Foreign Affairs (Roëll), was composed of over twenty attendants, Madame had difficulty in finding quarters for so many persons in her hôtel. She gave the grand officers the rooms of her domestics, and the other members of the party secured quarters in the neighboring inns. Louis, who always carried with him the furnishings of his bedroom, found himself very comfortably installed; and he was entirely content, so long as the Seine separated him from his wife.

The morning of his arrival, Louis presented himself at the Tuileries, where his first interview with his brother was very friendly. Then, at noon, he went to Malmaison, to attend the fête offered by Joséphine to the kings then in Paris: the sovereigns of Saxony, Würtemberg, and Naples. The following day, he received a visit from Hortense, who wished to give him no cause for complaint. She came with her chevalier d'hon-

neur, and the only Holland lady whom she had with her at Paris, Mme. Harel.

Louis exchanged visits of courtesy with the sovereigns then at Paris, and with the members of his family. He received several words of warning, which put him on his guard. Julie, for instance, said to him: "If you fear annexation, you have made a mistake to come here."

At his second interview with the Emperor at the Tuileries, Napoleon stated to him very frankly his intentions regarding Holland. He wished to annex the State to the Empire, and offered Louis his choice of a residence in Paris, or elsewhere, as a French prince; or another crown, in Germany. It only remained to decide upon the manner in which the annexation should be carried out: through his abdication, or by force of arms. In the second event, he could expect no consideration. To Fontanes, who was present, the Emperor remarked, without paying any attention to Louis: "Holland is entirely an English colony, and a greater enemy of France than England herself. . . . I wish to swallow up (*manger*) Holland!"

All this was in private; but at the opening of the Corps Législatif (3 December), the Emperor announced his intentions in no ambiguous terms: "Holland, placed between England and France," he said, . . . "is the outlet of the principal arteries of my Empire; a change has become necessary: the security of my frontiers, and the widely extended interests of my Empire, imperiously demand it." Louis had intended to be present at the ceremony, in his quality of French prince and grand dignitary; but he was fortunately warned in time, by several members of the Family, to whom the Emperor had read his speech. Louis accordingly stayed at home; and he was present, neither at the *Te Deum* that morning, nor at the banquet at the Tuileries in the evening. But, the following day, he attended the dinner and the ball at the Hôtel-de-Ville. The 5th, he had a new audience with the Emperor, who informed him that forty thousand French troops were under orders to enter Holland, for the purpose of uniting it to the Grand-Empire, and that he must abdicate.

Louis was so taken back that, at the moment, he made no reply; but, the following morning, he sent for the Minister of Foreign Affairs (Champagny), and had a long conference with him. He said that he did not deplore the loss of his throne, from which he would descend voluntarily, provided the Emperor would replace him by the Queen, or some other person who possessed his confidence. Solely in the best interests of France, and of the Emperor, he begged that Holland might be left at least nominally independent. Any other course would lead to the ruin of the national industries and the exodus of capital. At the price of all his blood, he wished to avoid such misfortunes. If the Emperor would consent to leave him on the throne, he would guarantee that Holland in the future should conform to the French system. He offered to cede the left bank of the Meuse, and hoped that the Emperor would compensate him by some territory in Germany, such as the grand-duchy of Berg. He would annul all of his changes in the tariffs; recall all of the decrees which had displeased the Emperor — in short, he would accept everything except bankruptcy and the conscription. He would have all of his propositions put in writing, and presented by his minister and his ambassador; in the meantime, he prayed the Emperor to take no further steps.

Nevertheless, Louis had little hope of a favorable outcome. The same day, he wrote his ministers: " The cause is almost lost . . . Nothing is yet decided finally, but the situation is desperate. . . . Pity your country, but pity also my bizarre and cruel destiny." In the same letter, Louis announced that, unless restrained by force, he should return to Holland, " to be the witness of an event which would cause the unhappiness of the sad remainder of his life."

The return of Louis to Holland, to resist the forcible annexation by the French troops, was his trump card in the game with the Emperor, who could not afford to have an open scandal at the moment of his new marriage: it was the sole argument, the only threat, which could cause Napoleon to draw back. This card, Louis was adroit enough to keep up his sleeve; for he was

already aware that he was under surveillance, and must escape the watchful eyes of the Imperial police, if he wished to leave France. Therefore he put on a bold face, and concealed his anxiety, in the hope that all would yet turn out favorably.

The 14 December, the Minister of the Interior, in his exposé of the situation of the Empire to the Legislative Body, amplified the remarks of the Emperor, at the opening of the Session. "Well!" said the Emperor to Louis the following day, "you have read the discourse of my Minister of the Interior. You will not have found in it anything which was not in mine of the 3d of this month." — "Pardon me, Sire," replied Louis, "I find that Holland is really only a part of France; . . . I see that the fate of Holland is decided." — "Listen," interrupted Napoleon; "it was my first thought to take only the part situated on the left bank of the Meuse; but, on reflection, I see that that will not arrange our affairs . . . I need a large seacoast in order to combat England; consequently I wish to go as far as the Weser." — "Why not as far as the Elbe?" asked Louis. — "I do not need all that," replied the Emperor.

Although the decision of the Emperor seemed fixed, Louis was not without hopes, as he knew Napoleon's habit of always demanding more than he expected to obtain. He had therefore seized on the remark about "the left bank of the Meuse," as a life-saver thrown to him as he was sinking. He saw that Napoleon was determined to have at least Brabant and Zeeland, without giving any compensation in Germany; but he hoped to preserve his crown, with the northern provinces. He himself had offered to Champagny the left bank of the Meuse, and the Emperor seemed inclined to accept this compromise.

This interview took place on the 15 December, the day of the divorce, and Louis was present at the ceremonies in the evening. The following day, he went to the Trianon, as the guest of the Emperor. He hoped during his sojourn there, where the Family was united to exult over the downfall of the Beauharnais, that he might at least secure the approval of the Emperor to his separation from Hortense. But the moment

was not well chosen. The heart of Napoleon was torn with grief over his separation from Joséphine, and he had no idea of adding to the troubles of Hortense. That very day, he had given a formal proof of his kind feelings by naming her the Princess-Protectress of the Maisons-Napoléon.

Louis, however, was so wrapped up in his own affairs that he could not read the signs, and on the 17 December, at the Trianon, he addressed a letter to the Emperor, in which he requested a Family Council, to approve his separation from his wife. He offered to cede to her the hôtel which she occupied at Paris, and to give her an allowance of 500,000 francs from his Civil List. He made no complaints against Hortense, and gave no reasons for his action. Napoleon made no reply in writing, although he may have talked with Louis; and four days later he sent the letter to Cambacérès to file in the Archives.

On the 22 December, the Emperor issued his orders to Cambacérès, to convoke, for Sunday the 24th, in the Throne Room of the Tuileries, the Family Council, over which he was directed to preside in his capacity of Arch-Chancellor of the Empire. The Council was to be composed of a prince of the Imperial family (Jérôme), one of the grand dignitaries (Murat), one of the senior marshals (Moncey), the chancellor of the Senate (Laplace), and the president of the Cour de Cassation (Muraire). The grand-judge, and Minister of Justice, Regnier, was to fulfill the functions of public minister, and Regnault, the Secretary of State of the Imperial Family, was to be the recorder.

At the meeting of the Council, Jérôme acted as the interpreter of the Emperor, and stated that the King of Holland had not alleged any motives for his demand; therefore the Council could not give any opinion upon a request for which no reasons were given. The members all coincided with this view, and the demand of Louis was rejected, "subject to the good pleasure of His Majesty."

Thus ended in failure the design so long cherished by Louis. At that time, he had no grievances which he could specify

against Hortense. Her affair with Flahaut was still shrouded in mystery, and he had no proofs of her infidelity.[1] He could allege nothing worse than an incompatibility of temperament, which was hardly a valid ground for a formal separation. It was therefore useless for him to try to reopen the case.

Based upon the finding of the Family Council, the Emperor directed Duroc to write an official letter, on the 24 December, authorizing the Queen of Holland to reside in Paris. She was to have as habitations the hôtel in the Rue Cerutti and the château of Saint-Leu; an annual allowance of a million francs; and to retain the guardianship of her two sons. The check to Louis was therefore complete.

On the 17 December, at the same time that he made his request for a separation, Louis addressed a long letter to the Emperor, in which he implored his brother to forget all the faults he had committed, and give him another trial. To show his generous spirit, he offered to cede to France the island of Walcheren, which Napoleon had already virtually annexed to the Empire. After the offers which he himself had made to Champagny, the discourse of the Emperor to the Corps Législatif, and all that Napoleon had said to him in their numerous interviews, this letter is incomprehensible.

Then, as a proof of his entire submission, two days later he went to Paris, and entered into negotiations with an aide de camp of the Czar, with a view of securing "the good-will, the friendship, and the support of His Imperial Majesty."

Fortunately for Louis, the Emperor was ignorant of this step when he sent his reply (the 21st) to the letter of the 17th. After reiterating his statement that it was his first intention to annex all of Holland, Napoleon goes on to say that he will now be content with the left bank of the Rhine — not the Meuse — subject to five conditions:

(1) Interdiction of all commerce and all communication with England; (2) A fleet of 14 vessels of the line, 7 frigates, and 7

[1] Her son by Flahaut, the future Duc de Morny, was not born until nearly two years later (21 October 1811).

brigs or corvettes armed and equipped; (3) An army of 25,000 men; (4) Suppression of the marshals; (5) Abolition of all the false privileges of the nobility contrary to the Constitution.

One would imagine that annexation would be preferable to such vassalage; and the Emperor doubtless made his demands so severe, under the impression that Louis would abdicate, and thus open the way for the French occupation of Holland without noise or scandal. But Louis at once agreed to everything: "I will give my instructions to my ambassador," he said, "and I will return with my suite, and my elder son, to Holland."

In this statement, Louis showed his hand too plainly, and Napoleon was not deceived for a moment. He told Louis that he could not depart, "to raise against him the standard of revolt"; and that both he and his son must remain in France.

Upon the basis fixed by the Emperor in his letter of the 21 December, the negotiations were taken up by Champagny and Roëll. But, after accepting all the conditions, Louis at once began to haggle over every detail. He wanted to discuss, and modify, each separate article: to retain a small parcel out of the provinces ceded; to reduce the size of the fleet, and the number of the troops; to allow the marshals to preserve their titles for their lives. These discussions only served to complicate and delay the negotiations, and to irritate the Emperor. Napoleon refused all concessions, and ended by sending Oudinot to Antwerp, to assume command of the Army of the North, which was ordered to take possession of Brabant and Zeeland, without any treaty, as Louis refused to sign the act.

In an audience which Louis had with the Emperor a few days later, Napoleon let drop the remark, in the course of their conversation, that he was interested in the annexation only on account of his struggle with England; if the maritime peace were concluded, he would leave Holland independent. Louis seized on this idea, and wrote his ministers that this peace was their only hope — the sole means of avoiding the threatening peril. He gave instructions to send an envoy at once to London,

to open the negotiations, and then proceed to Paris, to give his report.

In the meantime, matters had come to a climax in Holland. On the 14 January, from Antwerp, Oudinot notified the governor of Berg-op-Zoom that he was ordered to take possession of the city in the name of the Emperor. Under instructions from Louis, the governor refused admission to the French troops. On the 18th, by courier from Oudinot, the Emperor learned of this check to his plans. He immediately ordered his Minister of War (Clarke) to notify the King that, unless his instructions were countermanded, the French troops would march on Amsterdam, and the reunion of Holland to France would be proclaimed.

That evening, Louis attended the reception at the Tuileries, and there was a very lively scene between him and the Emperor. At the end, Napoleon said to him: "I have already told you several times that I desire your abdication. I again repeat it. Become once more a French prince, and you will have an agreeable life, without cares." To this brutal declaration, Louis replied: "You can make me descend from the throne, but, being no longer King of Holland, you can never constrain me to remain a French prince."

It is not easy to understand the policy of Napoleon in these negotiations with his favorite brother. M. Masson suggests the hypothesis that his real intentions were to bring pressure on England to make peace, in the face of his threat to annex Holland to the Empire.[2]

Pursuant to this conversation with Louis, on the 20 January the Emperor ordered the formation of the Army of Brabant, whose territory would comprise all of the country between the Meuse, the Escaut, and the Ocean.

Four days later (24 January), the Emperor approved the note agreed upon, as the result of the negotiations between Champagny and Roëll. "His Imperial Majesty proposes," it read: "(1) To recall near to his person the Prince of his Blood

[2] See 5 Masson, 179.

whom he has placed on the throne of Holland; (2) to have all the outlets and ports of Holland occupied by the French troops . . . ; (3) to employ all means . . . to cause Holland to re-enter the Continental System . . ."

If this note was really intended only for its effect on the English negotiations, it certainly had an air of finality. But Louis based his hopes on the understanding that everything would remain *in statu quo* until the reply was received from England. He wrote his ministers: "The loss of Holland is certain without a prompt peace."

The Emperor, however, had no intention of staying his hand, and on the 27 January he ordered Clarke to send instructions to Oudinot to take military possession of the territory between the Meuse and the Escaut. Later, on the same day, Champagny sent for Roëll to notify him that the French troops had entered Bréda and Berg-op-Zoom. On the 28th, through a letter from Clarke, Louis learned for the first time of the formation of the Army of Brabant.

In a long communication to the Emperor, Louis protested against these measures; but he ended, as usual, by yielding on all points. On the 29th, he sent to his troops an order — bearing the signature and the cabalistic words agreed upon — to comply with the instructions of the Duc de Reggio (Oudinot). Three days later, he sent word to his ministers that, for the moment, he could not return to Holland, and that the fate of the kingdom depended on the action of England.

On the 3 February, Louis presented himself at the Tuileries, and had another trying interview with the Emperor. At the time, he made no reply to the reproaches of his brother, but the following day he wrote a very submissive letter, in which he accepted everything, as a *fait accompli*. "I promise you to follow faithfully all of the engagements which you have imposed upon me," he said; "I give you my word of honor to conform to them sincerely and loyally."

This same day (4 February), Fouché called at the Hôtel de Brienne, to make known the orders of the Emperor, and ascertain the decision of Louis. Among the many important engage-

ments which the King was called upon to undertake were: the abandonment of Brabant and Zeeland; the strict enforcement of the Continental System; and the establishment of the French custom-houses. No mention was made of the fleet of 28 vessels, or of the army of 25,000 men; therefore the conditions, on the whole, were not so onerous as those first proposed by the Emperor. Louis agreed to everything; furthermore, to show his good-will, he at once abolished the dignity of marshal of Holland, and proposed to his Legislative Body to repeal the law reviving the nobility.

Having taken these steps, Louis hoped that the march of the troops would be arrested; but on the 7th, the Emperor gave orders, through his Minister of War, for the Army of Brabant to occupy Holland as far as the southern (Waal) arm of the Rhine. On learning of this act of bad faith, Louis at once revoked his instructions, and two days later sent a verbal order, by one of his aides de camp, for the Minister of War "to make all preparations for the defence of the capital." Then, he was taken seriously ill, and for several days was unable to attend to his affairs.

The Emperor thought that the illness of Louis was assumed, for the purpose of exciting his sympathy; but he finally paid his brother a brief visit at the Hôtel de Brienne. At the end of ten days, Louis was well enough to take up his affairs again, and on the 20th he wrote Champagny that he submitted to all the demands. Then, as usual, he began at once to suggest various changes in the articles of the agreement. At the same time he sent several contradictory orders to his ministers, telling them at one moment to submit; at the next, to offer a passive resistance. And so the days passed.

On at least two occasions, in December and January, Napoleon might have taken advantage of the propositions of Louis, to force his abdication, and to pronounce the reunion. It was unusual for him, after having formed a project, and announced his decision, to draw back; and least of all before a resistance which was almost puerile in its weakness and incoherence. The

most plausible explanation of his course is to be found in the imminence of the Austrian marriage. The contract was signed, the ceremonies at Vienna were about to take place, and the new Empress was expected to arrive in France before the end of March. At a moment when he wished to have all the Family reunited at Compiègne, Napoleon could not afford to create a European scandal by making war on his brother, and driving him from his throne.

But Napoleon may have had another motive. Immediately after the divorce, he had been most kind, and most attentive, both to Joséphine and to Hortense, and had seemed to think that he could preserve the intimate relations which had existed for fourteen years. But as the day drew near for the arrival of the new Empress, he began to see things in a different light. He regretted that he had given the Élysée to Joséphine, and wished to exchange it for Laeken. Even at Malmaison, she was too near to Paris, so he gave her the château of Navarre, and practically exiled her to Normandie. The question of Hortense remained to be decided. For two years, she had lived at Paris, or at Saint-Leu. He could not be so cruel, or so unjust, as to drive her into exile after her mother. There was only one course possible: to send her back to Holland with her husband, which meant that Louis must retain his throne, and return to occupy it. Therefore, one of the conditions of the treaty was that there should be at least an apparent reconciliation between the royal couple.

However, none of these motives is apparent in the letter which Napoleon wrote Louis on the 13 March. He only said: "All political reasons demanded the reunion of Holland to France; . . . but, as I see that this causes you so much grief, for the first time I make my policies subservient to the desire to be agreeable to you. . . . I should not have taken Brabant, and I should have augmented Holland by several millions of inhabitants, if you had observed the course of conduct which I had the right to expect of my brother and of a French prince. But the past is without remedy; may what has occurred serve you as a lesson for the future!"

Holland would therefore preserve her independence, although amputated of two provinces; but the Emperor would give up none of the conditions of the treaty. As a concession to the pride of Louis, he agreed however to place in a separate, and secret, instrument some of the most objectionable clauses, such as the command of the Holland troops by a French general.

At first, Louis seemed overwhelmed with gratitude. "Content with the lot which Your Majesty has given me," he said, "my vows, like the aim of all my acts, will be to consolidate my government; to leave to my children an assured heritage; to be useful to my brother and my country, so far as may be in my power, that is to say, in making of Holland a friend and a constant ally, faithful to every proof, and always submissive to a branch of your family and of your name."

Louis may have been sincere at the moment he wrote this letter: his feelings were those of a condemned man who has received an unexpected reprieve at the foot of the scaffold. Content to save his crown, he did not regard too closely the treaty, which delivered Holland, bound hand and foot, into the power of France. It carried the interdiction of all commerce between Holland and England; the enforcement of this policy by a corps of 18,000 men, of whom two-thirds were to be Hollanders — all equipped and maintained at the expense of the Kingdom; the cession of Brabant, Zeeland, and part of Gelderland; a fleet of 9 vessels, 6 frigates, and 100 armed shallops — all maintained by Holland; and many other onerous provisions.

This treaty was signed on the 19 March, by Champagny in the name of the Emperor, and by Verhuel, formerly marshal and now admiral, in the name of the King. It was ratified by the Emperor the same day, prior to his departure for Compiègne to meet the Empress.

When Louis himself arrived at Compiègne, he was "surprised" to find his apartment so close to that of the Queen, and was "startled" by the suggestion of the Emperor that Hortense should return to Holland with him. He felt, however, that he could not refuse her a residence in that country; but it would be allowed only on the understanding that his

condescension should not modify in any respect the state of separation under which they had lived for the preceding two years. This statement, made by Louis at a later day, is not entirely in accord with the facts, as the return of Hortense, although not stipulated in the treaty, was one of the conditions imposed by the Emperor on his brother.

Louis, who had not yet ratified the treaty, was forced to do so, on his return to Paris, the 31 March. He signed, with the reservation: "Promising that it shall be observed by all the means in our power."

On the 5 April, at Saint-Cloud, Louis had his final audience with the Emperor, who was very cordial. As a signal mark of his good-will, on this occasion Napoleon accepted, "in the most gracious manner," the Holland decoration of the royal order of the Union, which for three years he had refused.

The following day, after a forced sojourn of over four months at Paris, Louis set out for Holland. In order to avoid traversing the ceded provinces, he made his journey by way of Brussels and Aix-la-Chapelle. On the 11 April, at five o'clock in the morning, he entered Amsterdam, where he had forbidden any manifestations — rather an unnecessary order on his part!

CHAPTER THIRTY

APRIL — JULY 1810

ABDICATION OF LOUIS

Louis's First Acts on His Return to Holland — He Is Joined by Hortense — Their Separate Lives — Louis Tries to Avoid the Execution of the Treaty — He Convokes a Commission — Its Verdict — Louis Meets Napoleon at Antwerp — Failure of the English Negotiations — Napoleon's Long Letter of Advice — A Clear Exposé of His Policy — Hortense Leaves Holland — The Emperor Ceases to Write Louis — He Searches for a Pretext to Intervene — The Valckenaer Mission — Its Failure — Napoleon Orders the Occupation of Amsterdam — Louis Acquiesces, but Prepares for Resistance — He Is Deterred by His Ministers — He Decides to Abdicate — His Proclamations — He Leaves Holland

THE first steps taken by Louis on his return to Amsterdam showed that he had no idea of observing the promises made to the Emperor, and the conditions of the treaty. He dismissed Van den Poll, the burgomaster of the city, the only official who had opposed the proposition of armed resistance to the French troops; he did not notify the French ambassador of his return; he severely reprimanded the Grand Chamberlain, who had ordered a *Te Deum* chanted in the royal chapel the day of the Emperor's marriage; and he ordered lists prepared of the few Frenchmen still in his service, with the intention of finding some pretext for their dismissal at an early date.

With the exception of the removal of the burgomaster, however, none of these measures was official. In his public acts, he endeavored to show that he was in accord with the Emperor. In receiving the congratulations of the Legislative Body and the Council of State, on Sunday the 16 April, he stated that, in order to draw closer the ties which attached him to France, he proposed to reunite his entire family in Holland.

After the departure of Louis, Hortense made a brief visit to the Emperor at Compiègne, and then set out for Holland with the crown-prince, Napoleon-Louis, leaving in Paris the younger boy, Louis-Napoleon. She passed through Antwerp on the 13 April, stopping only to change horses, and reached Utrecht the following day. At the frontier, she was met by the Grand Huntsman, whom Louis had sent to receive her.

At Utrecht, she was joined by the members of her household, but Louis did not arrive until the 16 April. As usual, he passed Holy Week there, and was very assiduous in his devotions; but he lived entirely separated from the Queen. On the 24th, they returned to Amsterdam, the Queen and her son arriving at three o'clock, and the King at six. In the evening, there was a popular gathering around the palace, and the sovereigns appeared on the balcony with their son. Two days later, the King authorized the grand dignitaries to pay their homages to the Queen, and the news was published in the gazettes. Misled by these reports, the Emperor wrote Hortense on the 26th: "I am assured that you are content with the King and with Holland: this gives me much pleasure." Hortense was too proud to complain of her cold reception; but Louis had taken steps to signify to all that their separation was final. Not satisfied with locking all the doors between his suite and that of the Queen, Louis had ordered the openings walled up. They met only at déjeuner, when the crown-prince was present, but never at dinner, or in the evening. The Queen was allowed to receive her friends; but as these visits evidently displeased the King, few persons came. In fact, Hortense was in quarantine.

Louis, apparently, could not endure the idea of living under the same roof with Hortense, and was absent most of the time, making short trips to all of the places in the vicinity of the capital. One saw, on all the routes, his yellow coach, with six horses, followed by his escort of aides de camp and the cavalry of his Guard.

Within ten days after his return, Louis had begun to devise schemes to escape the strict execution of the treaty. On the

18 April, he wrote the Emperor to protest against the occupation of Leyden and The Hague by the French troops, and their march on Utrecht. Napoleon replied that he expected only the strict execution of the treaty. "When a treaty exists," he said, "the terms of the treaty are the only law, and my intervention is no longer necessary in any respect. However, never doubt my desire to seize every occasion to be agreeable to you."

In fact, Louis seems to have signed the treaty without realizing its full purport. Shorn of two of his best provinces; with a budget of 155 millions, and receipts of only 110 millions, he had agreed to create and maintain a large fleet, and had promised to equip and pay 18,000 men. In this dilemma, Louis conceived the idea of convoking a Grand Commission, composed of the principal public men of Holland, to advise him as to the best policy to pursue.

For the deliberations of this Commission, Louis posed three questions:

(1) Is it possible for us to endure the state in which we are going to find ourselves after the treaty? *It being well understood that we shall do no more than to execute what is possible.*

(2) If it is almost impossible to execute; humiliating for the nation and for myself; . . . if there is another means less painful for the present generation, what is it?

(3) If, on the contrary, the nation thinks that we can exist, what must be done? . . .

After presenting these questions, Louis left the hall. The Commission deliberated, and decided that, "the moment, as critical as it was, still presented some good chances that the abdication of the King might be avoided." Louis was invited to return, and the president notified him of this unanimous opinion.

Having accepted this verdict, the only proper course for Louis to follow would have been to endeavor by all means to regain the confidence of his brother; to carry out strictly the promises made at Paris, and to enter loyally into the French system. But such a course was incompatible with the tem-

perament and the character of Louis. He could not refrain from hostile acts, from recriminations, from petty falsehoods, which showed his ill-will, irritated the Emperor, and were profitless both for Holland and for himself.

On the 5 May, by invitation of the Emperor, Louis met his brother at Antwerp. After their conference, he could no longer preserve any illusions regarding the English negotiations, upon which he had pinned his last hope. The mission of Ouvrard and Labouchère had failed completely; as had also a diplomatic feeler put forth by Fouché, upon his own responsibility, for an Anglo-French alliance against the United States.[1]

At this same interview, Louis made the mistake of bringing some unfounded charges against La Rochefoucauld, the French ambassador at Amsterdam, to whom he had recently taken a great dislike. The Emperor called the ambassador to Antwerp, and investigated the whole matter. The outcome was, that La Rochefoucauld proved the charges to be false; and he received signal honors from the Emperor. He returned to Amsterdam determined to avenge himself.

Other minor incidents occurred, which served to increase the irritation of the Emperor, and he finally wrote Louis a long letter, in which he said, in part:

"If you desire to follow the proper political course, love France, love my glory; it is the sole way of serving the King of Holland. . . . If you had been what you ought to be, I should take as much interest in Holland as in France; I should have her prosperity at heart as much as that of France. In placing you upon the throne of Holland, I certainly thought that I was putting there a French citizen, as devoted to the welfare of France, and as jealous as myself of all that interests the mother-country. If you had followed this line of conduct, you would be to-day the sovereign of six million inhabitants; I should

[1] For this action, Fouché was soon very properly disgraced; he retired to Italy, and finally settled at Aix. He was succeeded as Minister of Police by Savary, Duc de Rovigo. See 2 Rose, 196; Madelin's *Fouché,* chapter XX; and 5 Masson, 231–232.

have considered the throne of Holland a pedestal upon which I should have erected Hamburg, and a part of the North of Germany. Very far from that, you have pursued a course diametrically opposite; I have been forced to forbid you France, and to take a part of your country . . .

"Be, first of all, a Frenchman and brother of the Emperor: you will then be sure that you are in the path of the true interests of Holland. But why all this? The lot is cast, you are incorrigible! You already wish to drive away the few Frenchmen who remain; it is neither counsels, nor advice, nor affection, that one must give you . . . Louis, you do not wish to reign long: all your actions reveal better than your private letters the affections of your soul. Listen to a man who knows more than yourself. Return from your false route. Be indeed French at heart, or your people will discard you, and you will leave Holland an object of ridicule and pity . . ."

This letter has been quoted at considerable length, because it is a most complete and a most sincere exposé of the program which Napoleon had in mind in erecting the thrones of his brothers. His only thought, and his only aim, was to augment the grandeur of France, which he considered inseparable from his own. It is needless to say, that Napoleon cared nothing for the theory of nationalities; that the modern idea of the "rights of peoples to determine their own existences" had never entered his head. His policy was that of the old Roman Empire, where nothing counted when it came in conflict with the interests, the grandeur, and the glory of Rome.

Even more than ever, since his new marriage, Napoleon held the idea that his Empire was founded, not for a day or a year, but for eternity. The persistence of his designs shows his confidence in his dynasty. Upon what ground then could Louis base any hopes, upon what could he count, when the independence of Holland came in conflict with the future of the Grand-Empire?

But Louis, not less than the other Bonapartes, felt that he held his throne by *divine right:* he had received it from God

— not from his brother. With this sentiment of his divine designation, and Napoleon's conviction of his own omnipotence and infallibility, a clash was inevitable; and the abyss between them became deeper from day to day. Both in his public policy, and in his private acts, Louis was constantly in opposition to the system of the Emperor. In defiance of a secret clause of the treaty, he had named a minister to Vienna; and by his harsh treatment of Hortense, he had forced her to leave Amsterdam, and take refuge at Loo.[2]

The Emperor finally became so tired of the eternal complaints of Louis, repeated in his daily letters, that he cut short their correspondence. "Do not write me any more of your regular phrases," he said. "For three years past, you have done nothing but reiterate them, and show their falsity every day." Then, in his own hand, after his signature, Napoleon added: "This is the last letter that I shall write you in my life." At the same time, the Emperor ordered the reinstatement of Van den Poll, and wrote Champagny at Paris to dismiss the Holland ambassador, Verhuel, but to "show him personal regards, and make him the usual present."

At this time, Louis was constantly shifting his residence from the palace in Amsterdam to the pavilion at Haarlem, and it was at the latter place that he received the Emperor's fulminating declaration. Louis replied, with his usual protestations of devotion, and said that the Emperor had only to express a wish, to have it promptly executed.

But "deeds speak louder than words," and Louis paid no attention to the order directing him to reinstate the burgomaster. To an aide de camp of Oudinot, he said that, if an attempt were made to occupy Amsterdam, "he should repulse force with force." At a parade of his Guard, he appeared holding the little crown-prince by the hand, and recommended his

[2] A royal residence, built by the stadtholder, William III, situated 18 miles northeast of Arnhem. From there, Hortense went to the baths of Plombières; but she did not flee the country in secrecy, as often stated. Her departure from Amsterdam, and her intention to take the waters at Plombières, were both announced publicly in the journals. (See 5 Masson, 243, note.)

son to their fidelity. He loaded with favors the former Minister of War, who had been ordered dismissed by the Emperor, for preparing the plans for the defence of Amsterdam.

On the 9 June, through Champagny, Napoleon notified Sérurier, the chargé d'affaires in Holland, that he had no intention of having his troops occupy Amsterdam; but, at the first act of preparedness, which could be considered as an insult to France, Sérurier was to demand his passports, and leave Holland. In this same letter, the chargé d'affaires was instructed to "keep up the quarrel." Napoleon's idea seems to have been to pave the way for his intervention by a pretext stronger than the passive resistance offered to his wishes by his brother. Having made Louis an independent king, and permitted him to appoint ministers to Russia, Austria, and half a dozen other Powers, he felt that he could not brave the public opinion of all Europe by forcibly annexing Holland for no better reason than his own good pleasure. At this moment, his quarrel with Lucien had reached a climax, and he was less desirous than in January to dethrone his brother Louis, who was the father of the heir presumptive to his Empire. This explains his reluctance to order the occupation of Amsterdam, and the vacillation of his policy in dealing with Holland. He still wanted to "swallow up" the country, but he awaited a new grievance which would give him a plausible reason for setting his troops in motion. In the meantime, knowing the feebleness of his brother's character, he was far from imagining that Louis would have resolution enough to abdicate, and go into voluntary exile.

As he had no representative in France, since the dismissal of his ambassador, on the 14 June Louis sent a special envoy to Paris, to see Champagny, and endeavor to find some method of ending the misunderstandings between the two countries. The person chosen for this delicate mission was a financier named Valckenaer, who was recognized as being on very

friendly terms with the members of the French legation at Amsterdam. He was "very keen, very well-informed, and very active," but he had need of genius to succeed.

In addition to the explanations and promises which he was authorized to make on behalf of Louis, Valckenaer was charged to propose that "the King of Holland render faith and homage to the Emperor, as to his sovereign, and submit to pay him an annual tribute." In return, Louis demanded the position of "commander-in-chief of the allied troops upon his territory, similar to the cases of his brothers, the kings of Naples and of Spain."

At the same time that he made this curious proposition, which he seemed to consider a concession *par excellence,* Louis ordered the liberation of all the persons arrested by the French officials for violations of the customs-laws, and forbade the French troops to use the Haarlem bridge, on the ground that the city was a royal residence. Following these two measures, the French were insulted in Rotterdam, and other cities occupied by the Imperial forces. It began to look as though a revolt were being prepared — not by orders of the King, perhaps, but with his tacit approval.

As soon as the news of these events reached the Emperor, he seized the occasion for which he had so long been waiting, and issued orders for the occupation of Amsterdam by the French troops. "If this menace had been made by Austria or Russia," he wrote, "war would have ensued. If such an indignity had been offered by the king of Prussia, or of Bavaria, or of Würtemberg, he would have lost his throne. It is to repulse it that I occupy Amsterdam."

For the propositions of Valckenaer, Napoleon had only words of derision. "The Emperor, sovereign of the Grand-Empire, chief of the Continental League, become, by the force of his arms and his genius, the arbiter of Europe," he said, "can regard himself as the suzerain of a good many princes, but he has this opinion above all regarding the king of Holland, a French conquest." As for the tribute: "The Emperor, strong in a revenue of 800 millions, and a reserve of 600 millions, has

need neither of money, nor credit, nor paper. It is not money which he demands of Holland, but vessels and soldiers, conformable to the treaty."

In these words, we find again a clear statement of the fundamental theory of the Grand-Empire. It was never the idea of Napoleon that the kings created by him, or the peoples over whom they ruled, should be independent. Therefore, he regarded as rebels and traitors those of his brothers who dared to assert their independence of his system. Perhaps he did not wish, at this time, to force his brother to abdicate, as this would cause him embarrassment; but he desired to teach Louis a lesson, and prove that he was the master, against whom any resistance was a crime of *lèse-majesté.*

The peculiar bent of Louis's mind is shown in the importance which he attached to the integrity of his capital. He had abandoned to the Emperor two of his choicest provinces, and had permitted the French troops to occupy nearly all of his territory, but he seemed to regard Amsterdam as a Sacred City. This was all the more strange because Amsterdam was not the traditional capital of Holland: it was only a large commercial city, which had been the seat of the Government for less than two years. It had never been a royal residence, or the home of the Court, and Louis had been obliged to appropriate a municipal building for his palace. It was a republican stronghold, where royalty was so unwelcome that Louis rarely resided in the city. The Hague was the former capital, and Utrecht had been made the capital by Louis for a time; but he had not protested strongly against the occupation of these two places.

To the French chargé d'affaires, who notified Louis on the 28 June of the intended occupation of the city by the French forces, the King replied that he would " give the most positive orders that no opposition should be made to the entry by the French troops into the capital of the Prince Constable of the Empire "; but that he would not take any part in the ceremony. The 4 July had been fixed by Oudinot as the date of the occupa-

tion, and Louis said: "On the 4th, I cease to reign. I have lost the friendship of my brother: I shall none the less do what he desires, but let no one ask me to appear, for my mind is made up; I shall remain at Haarlem, and await there the course of events."

But, in spite of all his professions, Louis still dreamed of resistance. He first called a conference of his "marshals," and then, one of his ministers, but was astonished to find that they were all unanimously opposed to his plans. One of his ministers even advised that he should remain at Amsterdam after the occupation, and, so to speak, under the French general.

"That is too much!" cried Louis. "That decides me; I am going to put the Emperor at the foot of the wall, and force him to demonstrate in the face of Europe and of France the secret of his policies regarding Holland and myself for the past seven [*sic*] years."

Then he requested the ministers, once more, to take the question under consideration; and left the room so that they might deliberate freely. After a full discussion of the matter, the council agreed unanimously that "this defence, which could only last a few days, would be the greatest folly; . . . that the consequences would be terrible for the city, and for the whole country, which doubtless would be pillaged, sacked, and ruined from end to end; and that they were too good Hollanders to sacrifice their country for military vainglory (*une gloriole militaire*)." At the end, they carried their decision to Louis, namely, "to approve his abdication in favor of his two children."

On the 30 June, the final arrangements were made for the entry of the French troops. The King named as commander of the guard a Frenchman, General Bruno, nephew of Lauriston, and brother-in-law of Mme. de Boubers, the governess of the prince-royal. He was charged to receive Marshal Oudinot, and the French soldiers. Van den Poll resumed his functions as burgomaster, and arranged the police measures with Ad-

miral de Winter. The Duc de Reggio was officially notified of the arrangements at his headquarters at Utrecht.

On the first day of July, at the French legation, every one was in doubt regarding the intentions of the King. Sérurier conferred with one of the ministers, with the idea of persuading Louis to remain at Amsterdam, at least to receive Oudinot, before leaving for Haarlem, where it was expected that he would take up his residence during the French occupation of his capital. This had indeed been the first intention of Louis, as stated to his ministers, but he had since changed his mind. At the very moment that his suite were endeavoring to concert measures to keep him at Amsterdam, he was despatching his couriers in every direction: to the Emperor, with the news that he had abdicated in favor of his two sons; to the Queen, the same news, with an invitation to return and assume the regency; and, to all the Courts of Europe where he had ministers accredited, "a circular making known the motives and the conditions of the abdication."

Finally, Louis drafted with great pains the three essential documents, by which he endeavored to justify his act before the Nation and in the face of History: his abdication, a proclamation to the people, and a message to the Legislative Body.[3] In two of these papers he inserted a phrase which conveyed an odious reflection upon his wife: "I abdicate in favor of my beloved son, Napoleon-Louis, and, in default of him, of *his brother,* Charles-Louis-Napoleon." This work occupied Louis nearly all of his time the first two days of July. His hand was so crippled by his disease, that his writing was almost illegible.

This labor finished, Louis occupied himself with his private affairs: the disposal of the property he had acquired in Holland; the procuring of ten thousand francs in gold, for the expenses of his journey; the arrangements for relays of horses along his route, and so on. Then he received his ministers: to the Minister of the Interior he confided the three documents, which were to be printed, and posted everywhere in Amsterdam the following morning. In their presence, he drew up his act of

[3] An abstract of these documents is given, 5 Masson, 268–270.

resignation as a French prince and as Constable of the Empire. Finally, he took his leave of all but two, keeping for dinner the Minister of Police, whom the Emperor had expressly ordered him to dismiss, and his Secretary of State.

At the usual hour, dinner was served, followed by a reception, and the *jeu du roi;* at eleven o'clock, as on other evenings, Louis saluted the Court, and retired to his apartments. There he was joined by General Travers and Rear-Admiral Bloys, whom he had chosen for his companions in exile.[4]

With the assistance of his valet, Laforce, and his two aides, Louis finished the packing of his papers. At midnight, he entered the room of his son, whom he tenderly embraced, without awakening him. Then, with his three companions, he traversed the park, to find, at a side-gate, the carriage which the grand-écuyer had had prepared. This gate opened on a muddy ditch, which it was necessary to cross on a plank. Here, Louis found that he had forgotten a valuable casket, which he retraced his steps to get himself. On his return, in his haste, and nervousness, he lost his balance on the plank, and fell in the mire. He refused to go back to change his garments: wet and muddy, he entered the travelling-coach, which bore him away to exile.

[4] Travers was a Norman, whom Louis had first found as captain in his regiment of the 5th Dragoons. He had accompanied Louis to Holland, where he was loaded with honors, becoming first aide de camp, and grand-croix of the Union. Bloys was a native of Holland, who was attached as aide de camp to the person of the King; but he had received no other favors, except the cross of commander of the Union.

CHAPTER THIRTY-ONE

JULY — DECEMBER 1810

LOUIS IN EXILE

Louis Takes Refuge in Austria — He Notifies Madame, Jérôme, and Decazes of His Arrival at Töplitz — His Contradictory Statements — Napoleon Learns of the Abdication — He Annexes Holland to France — The Crown-Prince Brought to Paris — His Reception by the Emperor — Provisions for Hortense — Louis's Property Confiscated — His Protests — Letters from His Mother — Bylandt Enjoined from Going to Louis — Arrival of Decazes — Louis Moves to Marburg — He Is Ordered to Return to France — He Promises to Obey — He Goes to Gratz — Second Visit from Decazes — Résumé of Their Long Discussions — Dementia of Louis — His Physical and Mental Condition — Departure of Decazes — Louis's Reply to Berthier — He Declines to Accept Napoleon's Grants — He Also Orders Hortense to Decline Them — She Refuses to Obey

LEAVING Haarlem at a very early hour on the morning of the 3 July, Louis travelled around Amsterdam, stopping only long enough to send M. Cambier, the vice-president of his Council of State, a long letter of explanation and apology for his course.[1] Passing Loo, where he secured several articles, he reached Osnabrück, where he was on German territory. At this moment, he had not yet made up his mind whether to find refuge in Austria, Switzerland, or the United States. He had not learned the result of the Valckenaer mission to Paris, and he was still under the illusion that the Emperor might yield, recall him to Holland, and restore him to his throne. The itinerary which he followed on leaving Osnabrück is not known; but he probably traversed Hanover and Brunswick to reach Dresden, where he arrived on the 9 July; two days later he was at Töplitz[2] in Bohemia.

[1] This letter, which reveals Louis's state of mind, is cited in full, 5 Masson, 289–290.

[2] Töplitz, or Teplitz, is a town in northern Bohemia, about 46 miles from Prague. It is one of the most frequented watering-places in Europe, celebrated for its saline-alkaline springs. This fact undoubtedly attracted Louis.

Here Louis assumed the name of Saint-Leu, from his estate near Paris. He wrote Bourgoing, the French minister at Dresden, requesting him to advise the Emperor of his arrival, and of his desire to live quietly at Töplitz, to care for his health. The same day, he asked permission of the Emperor of Austria to reside in his States, and notified Comte Otto, the French ambassador at Vienna, of his arrival. On the 16th, he revealed the secret of his retreat to Madame, Jérôme, and Decazes, the three persons whom he considered the most devoted to his interests. These three letters, dated the same day, are strangely contradictory in their terms. To Jérôme, he said that, in abdicating, he had no intention of freeing himself from the authority of the Emperor, and that he wished to know if Napoleon would permit him to live at Saint-Leu as a private citizen. To his mother, he stated that his preference would be to take up his residence with her in the South of France, but the Emperor would never allow it, so he had demanded permission to remain in Germany. To Decazes, he expressed his desire to sell Saint-Leu, and asked whether this were possible. If so: to whom, for what price, in what manner? Therefore, at the same moment, he stated that he desired to live at Saint-Leu, in the Midi, and in Germany; asked Jérôme if the Emperor would let him reside at Saint-Leu, and wrote Decazes to find a purchaser! Nor was this the end of his contradictions. On the 20th, he wrote Fesch: "If the Emperor is willing, I would pray you to sell me your property in Corsica, and go to establish myself there." From all his actions during the first six months of 1810, it is evident that the malady of Louis had begun to affect his brain, and that his condition was no longer normal.

On the 2 July, the Emperor had left Saint-Cloud for Rambouillet, where he expected to remain a fortnight. On the 6th, the news of Louis's abdication and flight reached Paris by a special courier from Sérurier, and was forwarded to Napoleon. On the 8th, the Emperor had not yet fully decided what action to take. He sent orders that day to Oudinot, to guard the coasts carefully; and particularly, "to keep his eye on the

prince-royal; not to give him up to any person who might come for him on the part of the King, and to hold him to be put in charge of the officers whom the Emperor would send for him."

Napoleon's deliberations, however, were not long, and he asked no advice of his ministers or of the grand dignitaries of the Empire. The same day, he wrote Clarke his intention to reunite Holland to France. To Decrès, he said: "I have just signed the act of the reunion of Holland and of France." To Lebrun: "I have need of your services in Holland; have your travelling-carriages prepared, and come to Rambouillet as soon as possible to receive your instructions. It is indispensable that you leave Paris for Amsterdam to-morrow night."

The decree of annexation, dated the 9 July, was accompanied by a report of Champagny, which reproduced almost line for line the points of the note, handed Roëll on the 24 January, which was prepared as a base for the negotiations with England.[3]

In his report, Champagny explains the disregard of the clause in favor of the crown-prince, in the act of abdication, with the words: "His Majesty has given him the grand-duchy of Berg: he has therefore no need of any other establishment." The name of Louis was not mentioned; and there was no allusion either to his person or to his acts.

Hortense, who was still at Plombières, had received no news of Louis, except a letter from Mme. de Boubers, announcing his departure. She was on the point of forwarding this communication to the Emperor, when she received from him a confirmation of the report. In her reply, she stated that her écuyer was ready to start for Holland, to bring her son to Plombières, if the Emperor permitted it. She added that, "the thought of living near the Emperor was that which could render her the greatest happiness, and she prayed him to believe that this would always be the supreme desire of his daughter."

[3] By transferring the date of this note from January to July, some writers have affirmed that Louis, by his abdication, had only anticipated by a few days his removal by the Emperor. (See 5 Masson, 276, note.)

On the 10 July, the Emperor despatched his aide de camp Lauriston,[4] to Holland, in search of the crown-prince. He set out in one of the Imperial carriages, provided with a thousand napoleons, "so as to have no need of money"; and charged with letters to Oudinot and Mme. de Boubers. He reached Amsterdam on the 13th, and passed through Antwerp, on his return, the following day, accompanied by Bruno, the prince, and his governess. After a short stop at Laeken, where it was thought that Hortense might join them, they proceeded to Paris, where they arrived on the 20th. After passing the night with his brother, at the hôtel in the Rue Cerutti, the crown-prince was taken to Saint-Cloud.

The arrival of the little prince, and his reception by the Emperor, were announced in the *Moniteur*, by an article prepared by Méneval, and reviewed and corrected by Napoleon in his own hand: "My son," said the Emperor, "I will be your father: you shall lose nothing. The conduct of your father afflicts my heart. Illness alone can explain it. When you are grown-up, you will repay his debt and your own. Never forget that . . . your first duties are toward me, your second toward France; all your other duties, even those toward the peoples that I may confide to you, only come afterwards."

The Pavilion of Italy,[5] in the park of Saint-Cloud, was set aside for the residence of the Grand-Duc de Berg, and of the prince his brother; their service was to be transferred from Paris, and the grand marshal (Duroc) was to have charge of everything.

At the same time, the Emperor did not overlook the interests of Hortense. He took possession, in his own name, of the hôtel in the Rue Cerutti, and of the château at Saint-Leu; he also gave her, from the first of July, an allowance of a million a year, with 500,000 francs for the maintenance of the Duc de Berg, and 250,000 for her younger son, a total of 1,750,000 francs a

[4] As already stated, he was the uncle of General Bruno, and connected by marriage with Mme. de Boubers, whose daughter had married one of his brothers.

[5] Previously known as the Pavillon de Breteuil.

year. The same day, by a letter written under his orders by Duroc, he authorized the separation of Hortense from Louis, and gave her the administration of her property, as well as the guardianship of her children.[6]

The Emperor then proceeded to take over all of the property of Louis, both in France and in Holland, exactly the same as if his brother were dead. He left Louis absolutely nothing, with the idea of starving his brother out, if he could not bring him to terms in any other way. But he refused to allow any public accusations to be made, and ordered suppressed a circular letter prepared by Champagny, to be sent to the French envoys, explaining the reunion. He attributed all of Louis's actions to his health. "The King," he said, "embittered by a chronic malady which, for four years, left him no repose, and made him impatient and irritable, was not himself. . . . The situation of Holland was thorny: the King aggravated it. The nation needed a chief endowed with much prudence, experience, and energy: the malady of the King deprived it of these advantages; thus, the events which have led to this dénouement."

In the meantime, Napoleon was ignorant of the whereabouts of his brother, and it was not until the 20 July that he learned that Louis was at Töplitz.

Louis had no sooner abandoned his throne, than he began to regret it. He was haunted continually by the spectre of Holland: "Night and day," he said, "I can think of nothing else." His long letters to his ministers were full of his grievances: his valets were retained, his papers and his effects were sequestered; he was abandoned by the whole world. Bloys wanted to leave him, and he doubted whether Bylandt would be permitted to come in his place. He drew up a formal protest against the reunion, with the intention of sending a copy to all the sovereigns who had recognized him. Nothing could show clearer than this paper his idea that he reigned by divine right. "I am forced to protest," he said, "in the interests of my country, in my own

[6] Under the terms of the Family Statute, the departure of Louis, without orders or leave, conferred this right on the Emperor.

MADAME MÈRE

justification, and in the name of the young king, a minor at this moment, but who should come to his majority without losing the rights which *God and the nation have given him to the crown.*"

In this paper, he declared: (1) that the treaty was null and void, because accepted under duress, and ratified by him conditionally, when he was retained at Paris against his will; (2) that his abdication was forced by the Emperor, and that it was made in favor of his son; (3) that the pretended reunion of Holland and France was illegal, unjust, and arbitrary, in the eyes both of God and men, and should be considered null and of no effect.

This instrument, written, dated, and signed with his own hand, was sealed with the seal of State which he had brought to Töplitz. The document, which remained a secret for the moment,[7] is a remarkable exposition of the sentiments of Louis, at a time when he was talking of retiring, as a private citizen, to Corsica, Saint-Leu, or the Midi of France.

In the midst of his other preoccupations, Louis was fearful of running short of money. He wrote letter after letter to the arch-treasurer of the Empire, and to the bankers at Amsterdam, to reclaim the funds left in his palaces, or on deposit. He had received his diamonds, which he asked Jérôme to purchase for 500,000 francs.

The Emperor, notified by Lebrun, put a stop to this correspondence. All letters to, or from, Louis were ordered intercepted. No Hollander could go to him: Bylandt was directed to remain at Amsterdam. His papers and his wardrobe were retained at Paris: let him come and get them!

This interdiction, however, apparently did not apply to family letters, and Madame and Pauline carried on an active correspondence with Louis. His mother wrote him from Aix, in answer to one of his letters: "After having taken the waters,

[7] He sent a copy to the Emperor of Austria in July 1811, and to the Czar during the course of the summer of 1812, at the time his brother was in the midst of the Russian Campaign!

you had better do what you have proposed: that is to say, come to Saint-Leu, or maybe to Pont,[8] where I will go to await you, and where we can agree upon the best plan."

But Louis hesitated to commit himself; besides, the correspondence was slow, difficult, and far from secret. It was therefore decided to send some one to Töplitz who possessed the confidence both of Louis and of the family. The person thought of first was Lavalette, who had been one of the most intimate friends of Louis since the days that they were both aides de camp on the staff of General Bonaparte in Italy. But Louis had recently taken offence because Lavalette stated that, *for political reasons,* he could not write or see him often. Besides, Lavalette occupied a prominent official position, as director-general of the Postes, and was high in the confidence of the Emperor: therefore, it would be difficult for him to leave Paris.

The next person considered was Decazes, who eagerly embraced this opportunity of being the connecting link between the Emperor and the King of Holland. A letter was drafted by Decazes, corrected by Fesch, submitted doubtless to the Emperor, and then despatched to Louis. It was full of flattery of the King, and expressions of devotion on the part of Decazes.[9]

This long letter from Decazes was received better than the Family had anticipated. On the 21 August, Louis replied in a very friendly tone. After confiding several commissions to Decazes, such as the arrangement of some money matters, books to be sent, and news of his children to be communicated regularly, he closed with the words: "You see that my confidence, and my esteem for you, are not diminished."

Louis had never been able to get along without some obscure friend, whom he admitted to his intimacy, and loaded with favors. At present the post was vacant. Bloys was determined to return to Holland, and Travers was dissatisfied. Louis had

[8] The summer residence of Madame, near Paris. See Vol. I, page 240.

[9] His letter is quoted in full, 5 Masson, 302–305.

counted on the arrival of his former aide de camp, Bylandt; but it was doubtful whether the Emperor would give his permission. There was a large family of Bylandts, of whom three at least had been in the service of England or Hanover, and Napoleon had little confidence in their loyalty. At the very moment that this Charles de Bylandt demanded permission to join Louis, the Emperor had ordered him arrested, and interned at Vincennes, for objecting to the oath of fidelity to France. Louis thought that the arrest of Bylandt was due, less to his refusal to take the oath, than to his friendship for himself. He begged his mother to intercede, and a month later (18 September), Bylandt was set at liberty.

Travers, who could no longer endure his life with Louis, was determined to return to France, and finally took his departure, in October, soon after the arrival of Decazes. The latter had left Paris, the middle of September, by agreement with the Family; but his mission was entirely private, and he had no official standing.

Decazes found Louis in a very obstinate frame of mind. All of his property, both in Holland and in France, had been sequestered by orders of the Emperor, and he refused to talk of his affairs, or to agree to return to France, after finishing his course of waters. On the first of October, Louis set out for Gratz, with Travers and Decazes; but, learning en route that the Emperor of Austria was there, he changed his plans, and finally decided to go to Marburg.

At Marburg, Louis received, through the first secretary of the French legation at Vienna, a formal summons from the Emperor to return to France. This message read: " The duty of every French prince, and of every member of the Imperial family, is to reside in France, and he can absent himself only with the permision of the Emperor. After the reunion of Holland to France, the Emperor has tolerated the residence of the King of Holland at Töplitz; his health appeared to render these waters necessary to him; but to-day the Emperor wishes it understood that Prince Louis, as a French prince and grand

dignitary of the Empire, should return there by the first of December next at the latest, under penalty of being considered as disobedient to the Constitutions of the Empire and to the chief of his family, and treated as such."

Louis simply acknowledged receipt; but the summons seemed to have had some effect, for Decazes, when he departed a few days later, carried an engagement, both verbal and written, that Louis would return, provided the Emperor gave permission for him to live quietly either in France or in Italy.

Nevertheless, on the 2 November, Louis arrived with his physician, Latour, at Gratz, where he took up his residence, first at an inn, and later in the house of Comte Jordis, a general on the retired list. Here he lived very retired, visiting only the Archduke John, brother of the Emperor Francis, who had his residence in the city, and several French émigrés, who were located there. He did not seem to be short of funds, and it was known that the Vienna bank, where he had deposited his money and jewels, sent him a remittance of two thousand Austrian florins[10] each month. He also received drafts from his bankers in Holland.

He seemed to enjoy his life at Gratz, and to have forgotten his promises sent through Decazes. When Caroline wrote to remind him of his duties toward the Emperor, he replied: " Since I have been made a king against my will, and forced to mount a throne, I am no longer a French prince. . . . I am no longer willing or able to occupy anything but a private situation." He threatened, if menaced or annoyed, to depart for America.

On his return, Decazes communicated his good news to Madame and Pauline, who were with the Court at Fontainebleau. While there, the Emperor had arranged to have baptized a number of children, and among them was Louis-Napoleon, the youngest son of Louis and Hortense. This seemed a favorable occasion to have Louis return. Madame finally persuaded the Emperor to give orders to Savary to hand her " a passport for King Louis, with which he could go to any place he wished,

[10] Equivalent to about 5000 francs.

in Italy, or the South of France." Moreover, the Emperor gave his word that he would permit the King to live as a private citizen in any country of the Empire that he wished. These were the conditions stated by Louis, and it was believed that he would accept.

Accordingly, Decazes once more set out for Austria, armed with letters from Madame and Pauline, besides one written by the Prince de Neuchâtel, under the inspiration, if not the dictation, of the Emperor. He arrived at Vienna on the 24 November, and expected to reach Gratz the following evening.

Having received no letters from Louis since his departure, Decazes was in doubt as to how he would find the King. At Vienna, he learned that Louis was being treated by a very famous physician, of whom wonders were related. This was a bad sign, for if Louis had found a sorcerer, who he thought could cure him, there was little hope of persuading him to leave.

At his first interview, Decazes found that Louis was much changed: he talked only of Holland, his abdication, and his grievances. When Decazes tried to impress upon him the necessity of obeying the Emperor's commands, he became excited, and talked like a madman, saying that they would reduce him to the extremity of destroying himself.

At the end of a long discussion, Louis asked Decazes to put his arguments in writing, and said that he would reply. Decazes gave, as reasons for his obeying the Emperor's orders: His own happiness; his sons; his mother; the dynasty; France; Holland; the evils which would ensue; the impossibility of remaining there, or going elsewhere against the will of the Emperor; the judgment of the public and of History.

Louis replied that his happiness lay in retreat and obscurity; that, for his sons, he feared only for their rights; that his mother would be more unhappy otherwise; that the dynasty, and the Emperor, had vilified him, accused him, overthrown him, rolled him under foot; that, as for France, he had done all that he could, in not causing the blood of her children to flow in his quarrel, and in remaining her *Friend;* that he could do

nothing for Holland except as King; as for the evils which might ensue, he had only a worn-out body, overwhelmed with chagrin and every disease; that the Emperor would kill him, or make him suffer, somewhere; that he placed God and his conscience above the judgment of the public or of History.

This first discussion, of which a brief résumé is given above, was followed by many others, in which they both elaborated on their arguments, at interminable lengths. No one can read these ravings of Louis without being convinced that his mind was unbalanced. "There you will find," says M. Masson, "all the characteristics of dementia as defined and set forth by the alienists. At this moment, all the veils which had hidden the madness of Louis were violently torn aside, and by his own hand."[11]

The malady which had afflicted Louis for over ten years, and for which the medical science of that day had no cure, had resulted, first in locomotor ataxia, which had caused partial paralysis of both his upper and lower limbs, and had finally led to paresis.[12]

By writers hostile to Napoleon, Louis has been depicted as a man who had a sound mind in a sound body; with an upright, though feeble character; reduced to despair by the persecutions of his great brother, but struggling with all his energies against the tyranny with which Napoleon dominated the Continent. In reality, Louis was only a poor, feeble madman — impaired both in body and in mind — and not responsible for his acts.

Napoleon, when Louis was under his eye, subject to his

[11] 5 Masson, 328.

[12] It has been generally assumed that the malady of Louis was due to a special cause, and this conclusion seems to be supported by a remark made by Napoleon at Saint Helena. Alluding to these reports, Dr. Cabanès says: "Nothing, in our view, proves this specific cause. We can discover nothing more than the progressive effects of a rheumatic diathesis." And in a work on Louis, published in 1911 by André Duboscq, the author concludes his study with the words: "Thus, symptoms described, remedies demanded, remedies commanded, confirm us in our opinion touching the character called scrofulous of the malady without the addition of the element tuberculous or syphilitic." (Cabanès, *Légendes et curiosités de l'historie*, 2e série, 43, 62; 5e série, 209; Duboscq, *Louis Bonaparte en Hollande*, 63. *Cf.* also Baron du Casse, *Les Rois frères de Napoléon 1er*, 91.)

magnetic personality, could control his brother, and make him obey; but, at a distance, his power was lost. At moments, Napoleon seemed to have an intuition that his brother was not normal: "The man is an imbecile, he is entirely crazy," he wrote repeatedly; but these terms were not used in a precise or scientific sense. Napoleon did not realize that his brother was insane.

Decazes was powerless to act, in the face of this profound change in the character of Louis; he abandoned the useless struggle, and made ready to take his departure. Louis exulted over the manner in which he had disarmed the envoy of the Emperor. To the director of the police at Gratz, he said: "He will leave this week for Paris, whence he came, on the part of my brother, to persuade me to return to *my* States." But he was not willing to trust Decazes to give his version of their discussions, and he prepared a long response to the letter of Berthier, who had written him on behalf of the Family. The gist of his letter is contained in the words: "I should not, and I cannot, return to France, and show myself there, except by the side of my brother, with the rank that I have received in the eyes of all Europe, and which I have not deserved to lose. As that cannot be, I must resign myself; remain in retirement and obscurity, and there await the end of the hardest and saddest existence that there ever was." In conclusion, he wrote: "The innocent victim of events, I can still, without giving up to despair, await the end of my life, in peace and retirement, if my brother wishes it; and if, as every one here thinks, he takes no further [notice] of me; if not, I shall await further blows without braving them, but with the resignation of an honest man."

This was his last word. Armed with this letter, and others to Madame and Pauline, Decazes left for Paris. He had failed, but no blame was attached to him by any of the members of the Family.[13]

[13] During his absence, Decazes was named counselor at the Imperial Court of Paris; a year later (3 March 1812), he became private secretary to Her Imperial Highness Madame, mother of the Emperor. His career was made.

In the *Moniteur* of the 15 December 1810, there appeared a whole series of acts concerning Holland, and Louis himself. He was to retain his royal title, and to have a revenue of two million francs; he was also allowed to keep Saint-Leu. No public arrangement was made in favor of Hortense, as she was not a "daughter of France."

Under all the circumstances, it would seem that the Emperor had treated his brother very generously; but Louis was not satisfied. In a communication, addressed to the French Senate,[14] he filed a formal protest, and refused all the grants.

But it was one thing to protest; it was another to have his protest registered, and given the publicity which he desired. As he had no confidence in the posts, he sent his valet de chambre to Paris, to deliver the paper to the secretary of the Senate. The Emperor ordered no action to be taken; so Louis's protest was a *brutum fulmen.*

It was also in vain that Louis wrote his wife, to command her to refuse "the smallest part of this vile and grievous donation" from the Emperor. Hortense had no hesitation in accepting the Paris hôtel and the château of Saint-Leu, as well as the revenues of two millions, attributed to Louis as his appanage as French prince.

Thus, Louis was deprived of his crown, his children, and his property. "He was a madman; but if he had not been one, was not this enough to make him crazy?"[15]

[14] Cited, 4 Masson, 343–345.
[15] *Op. cit.*, 346.

CHAPTER THIRTY-TWO

JUNE 1809 — JUNE 1811

JOSEPH'S UNSTABLE THRONE

New Activities of the English — Battle of Talavera — Soult Succeeds Jourdan — The Emperor Decides to Go to Spain — Then, Puts Off His Departure — He Annexes the Northern Provinces — Considers the Release of Ferdinand — Joseph Sends for Julie — The Azanza Mission — Joseph's Dangerous Measures — Napoleon Reorganizes His Forces in Spain — The King Commands Only the Troops at Madrid — He Announces His Retirement, but Remains — He Sends Almenara to Paris — His Ultimatum — The Emperor's New Proposition — Joseph's Reply — Napoleon's Reasons for Not Going to Spain — He Tries to Force Joseph's Abdication — The King Again Offers to Retire — He Finally Goes to Paris for the Baptism — His Conference with the Emperor — Napoleon Yields, in Part — His Final Decision — His Generosity to Joseph — The King Returns to Madrid — Napoleon's Fatal Weakness — He Yields to the Spirit of the Clan

AFTER Napoleon's return to France, in January 1809, serious obstacles had arisen to ruin his hopes for a peaceful settlement of affairs in the Peninsula. Instead of being discouraged by the failure of Moore's expedition, England made a new effort to sustain the Spaniards, and relieve Portugal. The last of April, Wellington arrived at Lisbon with large reënforcements of English troops. He advanced on the Douro, attacked Soult at Oporto, and finally drove him out of Portugal, with the loss of all his artillery and his baggage train. In Galicia, Soult was joined by Ney, but the two marshals did not act in harmony, and the province was soon evacuated by the French forces.

Wellington returned to the Tagus, and concentrated his army for an advance on Madrid. The approach of the allied forces created great alarm at the capital, and King Joseph advanced with his Guard and the reserves to meet the enemy. The fate of the campaign depended on the reunion to his forces of the

corps of Soult, Ney, and Mortier, who had been ordered to join him. But Joseph and Jourdan rashly decided to attack Wellington before they could rely upon the coöperation of the 50,000 men led by Soult. The French army did not exceed 40,000, while Wellington had at least 60,000 men, posted in a strong position. All of the French attacks were gallantly repulsed, and the English claimed that the battle of Talavera (27–28 July) was a victory. The two armies remained facing each other the following day; then Joseph, hearing that his capital was threatened, ordered a retreat.

Wellington did not advance after the battle, and finally withdrew his army, on hearing of the approach of Soult. The news of the Emperor's victory at Wagram, the armistice of Znaim, and the retreat of the English, consoled Joseph for the loss of Galicia, and his want of success at Talavera.

At this time, it is said that Soult urged the King to unite all his forces and advance on Lisbon by forced marches. This movement would have cut off Wellington's line of retreat, and disorganized his whole system of defence. "The most experienced military men," says Jomini, "have generally agreed in the opinion that this was the decisive moment in the entire war, and that the unfortunate issue of that war was attributable to allowing this opportunity to escape unimproved." This is also the opinion of Napier, who writes: "The French were in truth the masters of the Peninsula, but they terminated their operations at the very moment when they should have pursued them with redoubled activity." [1]

The Emperor was so dissatisfied with the course of events in the Peninsula that, on the 6 November, he appointed Soult major-general, in place of Jourdan, who was recalled to France. For a long time, Napoleon had had a very poor opinion of Jourdan — "rather a poor general, who always lacks resolution," he said to Reubell in 1802. He had never given Jourdan any active command, and it was much against his will that he had bestowed on this officer the bâton of marshal, on account of his services during the Revolution. The recall of Jourdan

[1] See 3 Jomini, 175–176, and note.

nipped in the bud the military aspirations of Joseph; for, as Rœderer said: "Jourdan made Joseph think that he was a man of war, and Joseph made Jourdan believe that he was a man of talent."

There was only one remedy for the state of affairs in the Peninsula: that was for the Emperor to go there in person, and take command of his armies. That this was his intention, as soon as he had concluded peace with Austria, is proved by the orders issued from Schönbrunn. On the 29 August, his campaign equipages — 63 carriage-horses and 69 saddle-horses — left Paris for Bayonne, where were already assembled the mule-teams specially provided for Spain after the campaign of 1808–1809. On the 26 September, the groom, Jardin, who accompanied the Emperor in all his campaigns, took charge, and awaited the arrival of his master.

From Schönbrunn, on the 7 October, a week before his departure for Paris, Napoleon wrote Clarke: "My intention is to bring together, for the beginning of December, 80,000 infantry men and 15,000 to 16,000 horsemen, to enter Spain with these reënforcements." His arrival was so fully expected that, on the 15 October, Joseph sent his first chamberlain, his chief écuyer, and one of his aides de camp, to meet the Emperor at the frontier.

The return of the Emperor to France, at first, did not cause any change in his plans: by a decree of the 28 November he ordered that, from the first of December, the Prince de Neuchâtel should assume the title and functions of major-general of the Army of Spain. This meant his intention to leave for the Peninsula at an early date, for Berthier was the inseparable companion of the Emperor in all his campaigns. Besides, the order was positive: "Make your arrangements to organize your staff and your bureaux; despatch to Bayonne your equipages and your aides de camp." On the very eve of the divorce, he wrote: "In a few days I shall be in Spain." On the 12 January 1810, the equipages of Berthier had arrived at Bayonne; and a fortnight later, all of the campaign equipment of the Em-

peror, Berthier, and Duroc, was forwarded to Burgos. Since the first of January, all preparations had been made for the reception of the Emperor at the château of Marrac. "Never had a departure been more formally resolved, and announced so publicly."[2]

Napoleon had never been confronted with a problem more difficult, and more urgent, than that in Spain; but for the first time in his life he shirked responsibility. He was disgusted, and disheartened; he refused to open or read the despatches from Spain, and had abstracts made for him. Confronted by the possibility of a withdrawal which was wounding to his pride; the resistance of a brother to whom he had always yielded; the necessity of defeating the hated English with whom he was brought face to face for the first time in his career; the terrible waste of men and money — in this dilemma, he hesitated and vacillated, as he had never done before. In the end, he postponed his departure, and gave the general command in Portugal to Masséna. On reflection, he had come to the conclusion that it was impossible, from Burgos or the frontiers of Portugal, to conduct his double matrimonial negotiations with Russia and Austria.

On the 14 January 1810, without any warning to Joseph, Napoleon took possession, by a simple decree, of a fourth of Spain — all of the provinces on the left bank of the Ebro. The procedure in this instance was so similar to that employed in the case of Holland, that it seems probable that Napoleon wished to force the abdication of Joseph, in the same way that he had brought about that of Louis. He was dissatisfied with the system of government of all his brothers, and was determined to assume personally the direction of all the States of his overgrown Empire.

In the case of Spain, the Emperor certainly had valid grounds for discontent. From 1800 to 1808, the country had furnished him soldiers, ships, and money; while, from 1808 to 1810, it had cost him three hundred millions in money, and three hun-

[2] 5 Masson, 88.

dred thousand men. At the present moment, he was employing there 270,000 soldiers, and scores of his ablest generals. The kingdom, cut off from its rich American possessions, could hardly balance its own budget — much less meet the expenses of the large French army of occupation. The only compensation possible was the annexation of a few provinces, and this Joseph was certain to resent.

Charles the Fourth consented to this dismemberment of his former kingdom, in the hope of obtaining Portugal; and his son, Ferdinand, would doubtless have agreed also, if he could have returned to his throne. The benefits to the Emperor, in the release of the Prince of the Asturias, would have been enormous; and it is hardly too much to say that they would have saved his crown. In annexing the provinces on the left bank of the Ebro, he could withdraw from Spain without any loss of prestige; he would save a hundred thousand men, and a hundred million francs a year; he would have at his disposal, for use wherever needed, a veteran army of over two hundred thousand men.

That Napoleon seriously considered this plan, is shown by his efforts to secure the hand of one of his nieces for Ferdinand. Here are the facts: On the 3 February, the Emperor called to Paris the eldest daughter of Lucien; Lolotte arrived on the 8 March, and remained until the 4 June. The crisis in Spain was between the 3 February and the middle of May. All the known facts are in accord.

The first intimation to Joseph of the Emperor's plans was contained in his letter of the 28 January, which alleged that he could no longer provide for the needs of his troops in Spain, and that Joseph must at least assume the expense of their maintenance. Joseph replied by making vague promises, all based upon contingencies which were equally uncertain. His whole letter, which was couched in a tone of arrogance, displayed his claims to recognition as the elder brother. Never before had he ventured to complain so loudly, or to assume such an air of offended dignity.

On the 2 March, Joseph received the news of the decree of annexation (8 February), of which he did not seem at first to appreciate the full significance. The same day, when his throne was shaking under him, he wrote his wife to come and join him in Spain. On the 4th, when the full text of the decree was known to him, he seriously considered the idea of abdicating; but, on the 5th, he again wrote Julie to take her departure. His main object seems to have been to spare his wife a renewal of the quarrel over the question of bearing the mantle of the new Empress on the occasion of the coming marriage. It will be remembered that all of the Imperial princesses, except Hortense, had strenuously objected to filling this "servile rôle" when Joséphine was crowned at Notre-Dame, and it would be even more humiliating for Julie now that she was Queen of Spain. "This nation which to-day greets me with an enthusiasm beyond your conception," Joseph wrote, "is so proud, that it would be humiliated if we do not maintain our station. Better be ill, and avoid all occasion; or, better still, take your departure before this scene of etiquette arises."

Joseph was placed, however, in a very perplexing situation: if he wished to obtain a recall of the decree, he could not afford at this moment to offend the Emperor by disarranging the plans for his marriage. He resolved, therefore, to send to Paris, as ambassador extraordinary, his minister Azanza, created for this occasion Duc de Santa-Fé, and chevalier of the Toison d'or. To this ambassador, Joseph gave very definite instructions, which would seem to indicate that he was preparing, either to abdicate, as proposed by his friend Miot, or to assume the rôle of a national king, and rule without the support or the domination of his brother. Azanza was ordered to sell all of his property, of every description, in France, and invest the proceeds in foreign securities — "no matter in what place in Europe, provided they are good."

From a letter which Joseph wrote at this time to Julie, the second hypothesis mentioned above seems the more probable. "The manner in which I have been received here," he said, "surpasses every idea. If I were allowed to act freely, this

country would soon be happy and tranquil." Several decrees issued by Joseph, in absolute violation of the repeated orders of the Emperor, also lend weight to this conclusion. Finally, there is his address of the 19 March, in answer to the congratulations of the deputations on the occasion of his fête: "He expressed the firm determination never to consent to any dismemberment of Spain: never to sacrifice in any respect the independence of the kingdom." Furthermore, he neglected no means of convincing the people of his patriotism: he affected the habits, the language, the pleasures, the food of the Spaniards. He was more Spanish then the former kings — more even than the Spaniards themselves.

But, while Joseph was hesitating between the two courses which were open to him, he doubtless hoped that the mission of his ambassador might be successful, and the annexation decree be withdrawn. If not, Julie had orders to leave Paris at once with her two daughters, and join him at Madrid. Julie, however, had no idea of leaving Paris. Although she would not go to Compiègne to receive the new Empress, she would be present at the civil marriage at Saint-Cloud; also at the religious marriage in the Salon Carré; and, all Queen of Spain that she was, she would aid her sisters-in-law to bear the train of the mantle of Marie-Louise. In fact, she was willing to do anything, rather than leave Paris. In the end, however, she found an excuse, as usual, in her feeble health; and, under orders of her physician, she set out for Plombières to take the waters.

This action on the part of Julie disarmed Joseph: he could not afford to abdicate while his family and his fortune were in the hands of the Emperor. Besides, affairs in Spain were in a very precarious situation: the besieged cities refused to open their gates, and the guerrillas still rendered insecure all the lines of communication. Joseph was accordingly forced to resign himself to being King of Spain by the support of French bayonets. He suddenly became more moderate in his ideas. "If the Emperor wishes to disgust me with Spain," he wrote Julie from Cordova on the 12 April, "he must give up the idea

at once . . . The trial of two kingdoms is enough, and I have no desire for a third. I wish to live quietly; to acquire an estate in France, far from Paris, or else to be treated as a king and a brother. . . . It is therefore my desire that you prepare the means for us to live independently in retirement, and to be able to be just toward those who have well served me."

If Joseph really wished to be treated as "a king and brother"; to have revoked the decree of the 8 February, and everything put on the original footing, it was important for him to prove that he was in harmony with his brother's policies, and that he was giving them loyal support. This, however, was far from being the case: he issued decree after decree in absolute disregard of the Emperor's instructions. The most dangerous of these was his act of the 23 April, ordering the general armament of the nation, and the formation, throughout the entire kingdom, of civil militia, comprising all of the able-bodied men between the ages of 17 and 60 years. As the Emperor wrote, this placing of arms in the hands of the Spaniards, to use against the French, was "an insane idea." Nevertheless, the Emperor hesitated to deprive his brother openly of the command in Spain; but he took advantage of a complete reorganization of his forces in the Peninsula to pass over the name of Joseph, who was really, if not nominally, divested of all powers. The Peninsula was divided into a number of military districts, of which the commanders were to be under the direct orders of the Prince de Neuchâtel (Berthier), the major-general of the armies in Spain. The Army of Catalonia was composed of the Seventh Corps, 36,500 men, under Macdonald; the Army of Aragon, the Third Corps, 27,000 men, under Suchet; the Army of Portugal, under Masséna, comprising the Second Corps (Reynier), the Sixth (Ney), and the Eighth (Junot), a total of 64,000 troops, who were soon to be joined by the Ninth Corps (d'Erlon), of 12,000 men; and the Army of Andalusia, under Soult, composed of the First Corps (Victor), the Fourth (Sébastiani), and the Fifth (Mortier), representing 55,000 men. In addition, there were 56,500 troops at various points in the northern provinces, making a grand total of 251,000 men.

The diplomacy which the Emperor used, to soften the blow to Joseph, only resulted in wounding the King the more profoundly; and it created an antagonism between him and Marshal Soult which, in the end, was to have the most grave consequences.

In forming the armies mentioned above, the Emperor had not included several bodies of troops, stationed in or near the capital, and these were formed into the Army of the Centre, under the immediate command of the King. This army was composed of 4000 cavalry — one French regiment, and three of dragoons from Holland, Hanover, and Westphalia — and two divisions of infantry, each about 6000 strong — one French, and the other from the Confederation of the Rhine. Thus the King of Spain found himself practically reduced to the position of governor of one of his smallest provinces; and commander of the least formidable, and the worst organized, of the armies in the Peninsula.

In the other provinces, the marshals of the Empire, little by little, rendered themselves independent of the King, and even of the Emperor: they made laws, levied contributions, disposed of the lives and goods of their subjects, and endeavored to acquire large fortunes from their extraordinary chances. Europe had known no such tyranny since the days when the Roman proconsuls ruled over the conquered peoples. Until the fall of the Empire, Spain returned to a state of military feudalism.

In depriving his brother of the supreme command; in taking from him province after province; in reducing him to the position of a general of division, the Emperor may have thought that the pride of Joseph would lead him to abdicate, but he still held on. By every courier, he wrote his wife that he intended to retire, but nothing happened; and Napoleon was finally forced to the conclusion that Joseph would never abandon his throne voluntarily.

Disappointed at the failure of his special ambassador, Azanza, to obtain from the Emperor a revocation of his decrees, Joseph decided to send another envoy to Paris. This

time, he chose a M. d'Hervas, the father-in-law of Napoleon's favorite aide de camp, Duroc.[3] Joseph took this course against the advice of his friend Miot, who told him that the only means of gaining his cause was to go himself to Paris, and have a personal explanation with the Emperor. Through long experience, Miot was aware of the kind of fascination which Joseph seemed to exercise over his younger brother. If, at a distance, Napoleon paid no attention to the complaints of Joseph, when they were face to face he would be governed by the Spirit of the Clan, and yield to the demands of his elder brother, as he had always done in the past. But Joseph refused to go — perhaps through fear that he might not be allowed to return.

Almenara, who left Madrid on the 7 August, bore a letter to the Emperor which was in the nature of an ultimatum. Joseph demanded that the French army should be placed under his orders, and that he be given authority to dismiss any officers who conducted themselves badly. In return, he engaged: (1) that the French army should not cost the Emperor a sou beyond the two millions (a month) which he allowed for its maintenance; (2) that Spain should soon be as pacified as the kingdom of Naples had been; and, (3) that Spain should soon be as useful to France as she was to-day calamitous.

In every one of the letters from Joseph to his wife at this time we find repeated the same ideas which he had expressed in his letter to the Emperor. He insists upon the two conditions: (1) absolute and entire fidelity to the promises of integrity and independence made by him to the nation and guaranteed by the Emperor; (2) the absolute and real command of all the French troops in Spain.

" In the atmosphere of flattery in which he lives," writes M. Masson, " he has convinced himself that he is a great general; he is satisfied that nature has given him the qualities to make a great king; he is certain that he was sent by God." [4]

[3] Hervas had formerly been a resident of Paris, where he was a director of the Bank of Saint-Charles. Later, he was a member of the Spanish Cabinet, and received from Charles the Fourth the title of Marquis d'Almenara.

[4] 6 Masson, 145.

Therefore, all the power of France, and of the Grand-Empire, should be employed without stint to maintain him on the throne of Spain. This delirium of egotism, this dementia of royalism, in this liberal-minded man, of good intentions, is hard to understand. It was not the result, as in the case of Louis, of a disordered mind in a diseased body: "it was a special, and unclassified madness, the delirium of the throne." [5]

The results of the mission of Azanza had been most unfortunate for Joseph. At his first interview with Champagny, the ambassador had been so indiscreet as to show the minister his private instructions, which contained some injurious reflections on the French generals in Spain. By orders from the Emperor, Champagny then broke off all negotiations. Furthermore, the reports of the ambassador, which contained some caustic comments on the Emperor and his policy, fell in many cases into the hands of the guerrillas. He had neglected to code his letters, and they were at once published by the insurgent government: they created a great sensation in Spain, and, in the view of the partisans of Joseph, did much to ruin his cause.

In the case of Almenara, who seemed to have full powers to negotiate, the orders of the Emperor were for Champagny to treat the ambassador with every consideration. He was to be informed, however, that the Emperor desired the left bank of the Ebro by way of compensation for all that Spain had cost him in men and money up to the present moment.

As Joseph refused to abdicate, and the Emperor could not afford to abandon his brother to the guerrillas, what possible way was there out of this *impasse?* Joseph talked continually of the Constitution of Bayonne, and repeated over and over again that, if he were allowed to reign under that Constitution, to establish his civil government, he would pacify all Spain within less than a year, for he was sure of the support of the Spanish people.

Napoleon finally decided to take Joseph at his word. He ordered Champagny to write a long despatch stating, in effect,

[5] *Op. cit.*, 146.

that he was directed by His Majesty to send the Marquis d'Almenara to Madrid with instructions to recommend the King and his Cabinet to come to an understanding with the Council of the Insurgents, and to propose to it the Convention of Bayonne as the base of the Constitution of Spain. If the so-called Cortes was willing to enter into an arrangement, " His Majesty, except for a rectification of his frontiers which would give him some indispensable positions, would consent to the integrity of Spain, because that would place at his disposition the major part of his troops, and would put an end to a war which might still cost much blood."

There can be no doubt that Napoleon was sincere in making this proposition: he was weary of the whole Spanish affair, with its enormous cost in men and money. But his ideas regarding the true situation in the Peninsula were very vague and confused. The only hope of ending the struggle was to persuade, or compel, Joseph to abdicate, and to send Ferdinand back to his throne. Even if the Emperor could have forced the English to reëmbark, Spain would probably have continued to fight on until the end.

By a letter under date of the 11 November, Almenara announced that, following a final audience with the Emperor at Fontainebleau, he was setting out, charged with propositions to the King which could not fail to be agreeable to him. He reached Madrid on the 9 December, and laid the project of the Emperor before the Private Council the following day.

In listening to the Emperor's proposition, Joseph and his counselors were stupefied with amazement: Napoleon had fairly placed them with their backs to the wall. They had never dreamed that their words would be taken seriously. Then, Joseph entirely lost control of himself, and broke out in bitter complaints, "expressed," writes Miot, "with a vehemence which made me feel sorry for him, although I was accustomed to hearing him give way to similar fits of passion when we were alone."

At a conference held the following day, it was decided to lay the matter on the table, and make no reply to the Em-

peror, pending the arrival of Joseph's nephew, Marius Clary, who was expected to bring later news from Paris. Clary had been sent from Madrid on the 18 November, charged with a letter to Julie, in which Joseph instructed her to declare to the Emperor that, unless some new arrangements were made, he was resolved to leave Spain. This was only a repetition of what he had said in every letter since the month of April, but he added a new and unexpected proposition:

"The Emperor," he wrote, "maintains at present that I should not think of retiring. Will it be agreeable to him for me to return to Naples? I recall that he said to me at Venice and at Bayonne that he had been satisfied with the connections that he had had with me. I declare that I am ready to resume the same relations, and give him new proofs of my affection, as well as of my entire submission to his wishes, in that country, where such conduct is in accord with the character of the inhabitants and the state of affairs."

That this extraordinary idea of Joseph's was serious, is shown by another letter, written to Fesch at the same time: "If the Emperor persists in the intentions stated in your letter," he said, "there are left me no alternatives, except to retire to some estate a hundred leagues from Paris, . . . or to return to Naples, where I could better meet the wishes of the Emperor."

Nevertheless, it is hard to understand how Joseph could have imagined that his propositions would be acceptable. In the first place, they were in direct contradiction to all that he had written during the preceding six months. On the 12 April, he had declared to Julie: "In this case, my only wish is to retire: the trial of two kingdoms is enough, and I have no desire for a third." Even as late as the 9 September, he had written his wife to notify the Emperor that "he wished no strange throne, and reserved the right to decide upon an absolute retirement if he was not satisfied with the arrangements proposed for him."

In the second place, what did he suppose that the Emperor could do with Murat? It did not seem to enter his head that there would be any difficulty in dispossessing his sister and his brother-in-law for his benefit! He passed over this question

in silence, as a matter of no interest. He took no account of the thousands of men and millions of money sacrificed by the Emperor in the attempt to establish him on the throne of Spain, and thought that it was a simple proposition for Napoleon to turn out Murat, and give him back the crown of Naples.

Napoleon was not in the mood to entertain these new propositions of Joseph's. He was well aware that his affairs in Spain were going badly. The guerrillas were more active than ever before: no courier could reach Madrid without an escort of 300 or 400 men. The absence of news from Portugal was disquieting: Masséna was held up before the lines of Torres-Vedras, which was a bad sign. Only the personal presence of the Emperor, at the head of his armies in the Peninsula, could bring order out of this chaos; but many interests detained Napoleon at Paris: an heir to the throne was expected in a few months, and an early break with Russia seemed inevitable. If he wished to arrange the affairs of Spain, without leaving Paris, only one course seemed open to him: to force Joseph to abdicate, and send Ferdinand back to his throne. But he recoiled before the scandal of an open rupture with his brother, and could not reconcile himself to admitting the total failure of his Peninsular enterprise. Instead of using the only remedy possible, therefore, he employed palliatives which aggravated the trouble.

On the 18 January 1811, the Emperor ordered published in the *Moniteur* an article stating that, "the inhabitants of the arrondissements of the South, the Centre, and the North of Spain . . . demand vociferously to be united to the Empire." This was nothing less than a menace of total annexation. Using as a pretext the numerous letters in which Joseph had announced his early retirement, at the same time Napoleon sent Champagny to see the Queen, and conclude the arrangements. He objected to the purchase of a new estate by Joseph, but saw no objections to his settling at Mortefontaine. However, everything must be done according to rule: "The King should make his declaration to the French ambassador at Madrid; and so

arrange matters with him that this resolution will entail no disagreeable consequences for the safety and tranquillity of the country, nor occasion any scandal."

Julie transmitted the words of Champagny to Madrid, but the news found Joseph in a very different frame of mind: he no longer had the slightest idea of abdicating his throne. He at once became very calm, and moderated all of his demands. In turn, he made some propositions to the Emperor: "There are only two methods of arranging the affairs in Spain," he said. "I no longer speak of the first, which is not acceptable to the Emperor — that under which I should continue to be the lieutenant of the Emperor, receiving his orders, and having them executed by all the chiefs of the army corps. The other method is, that the chiefs receive their orders directly from the Emperor, and see that they are carried out, while I remain at the centre . . ." This idea seemed to him so brilliant that he charged Julie to develop it to the Emperor. In conclusion, he said that he was sure that the Emperor could not really desire his retirement — "because, I feel that I cannot easily be replaced here. No matter what they may think, if I leave Spain, it will be only by force."

At this time, Joseph was very short of funds: while the Emperor sent money to the Army of Portugal, and to the Army of the North, he sent none to the Army of the Centre. The civil employés at Madrid had received no pay in thirteen months, and the soldiers none for seven or eight months. It looked as though the Emperor intended to starve him out. Joseph was so worried that he became ill, and was in his bed when he received the *Moniteur* of the 26 February, containing a detailed statement of the Emperor's plans of annexation.

The announcement of the Emperor was made in response to the address of the Lord Chancellor at the opening of the British Parliament. At the end, Napoleon said: "Although England has acquired the certainty that she cannot defend Spain, she has without doubt given occupation to 300,000 French troops; but Spain, conquered step by step, is becoming entirely subjected; and it is England herself who, undertaking a struggle

in which experience has proved that all the probabilities are against her, *has compromised the independence and the integrity of Spain.*"

It only remained for the decree to issue: the project of annexation was clearly indicated. "Reduced to the abjection of a criminal or of the basest of men," Joseph wrote his wife, "I shall merit my fate if I hold out longer; announce therefore to the Emperor that I shall have set out when you receive this letter. . . . Nevertheless, I am not signing my abdication, because the Emperor would not wish me to do it here; and because, before leaving this country, I cannot myself declare my own death, and take part in my own funeral."

His suite would consist of only four persons, and eight or ten servants; he would take up his residence, on his arrival, at Mortefontaine. "To exist as quietly as I have lived restlessly for twenty-five years, and especially for ten years past, is the only thing that I ask of the Emperor."

But, why did he not abdicate, in conformity with the instructions sent him by the Emperor in January? Simply because he had no idea of doing so. If he set out for Paris, it would be to have an explanation with his brother — not to bring his abdication. Besides, he had no more intention of going to Paris than he had of giving up his throne. Joseph was a prince of "bluff"!

On the 29 March, Joseph received from Berthier, who had arrived at Bayonne, a message by the semaphore telegraph, announcing the birth of the King of Rome (20 March), and he once more declared that he was about to leave for Paris; but he did not start. On the 9 April, he received a letter from the Emperor, inviting him to be one of the godfathers of the young prince, and decided finally to take his departure. Leaving Madrid on the 23 April, he reached Paris on the 15 May, and took up his residence at the Luxembourg.

The day after his arrival, Joseph proceeded to Rambouillet, where the Court was in residence, and had an interview of six hours with the Emperor. As no witnesses were present at their

conference, we do not know what took place; but it is evident that Napoleon yielded as usual. On the 17th, the arrival of the King of Spain was formally announced in the *Moniteur;* and the same day, by order of the Emperor, Duroc directed Ségur, the grand-master of ceremonies, to notify all of the ministers, and grand officers of the Empire, that the King would receive them at the Luxembourg, on Sunday, the 19th.

Before the departure of the Emperor for Cherbourg (22 May), Joseph seems to have secured from him a verbal promise of the general command in Spain, and a monthly subsidy of a million francs. Nothing was in writing, but Napoleon promised to send his orders from Caen, and told Joseph to await them at Mortefontaine. In reality, Napoleon had not changed his plans at all: while he wished Joseph to abdicate, he could not, or would not, constrain him to do so. In the face of the violent tirades of Joseph, in order to end a painful scene he had made some vague promises, which he thought committed him to nothing. He was anxious to have his brother present, as a French prince, and grand dignitary of the Empire, at the fêtes of the baptism; therefore he deferred the formal announcement of his decision to a date so near that of the ceremony that Joseph could not well avoid taking part.

During the absence of the Emperor, Joseph remained in a painful state of indecision. In the words of his wife: "He makes a resolution, and immediately changes it; on the 29 May, he does not yet know what he will do; if he is still here at the date of the fêtes, he wishes to be ill, so as not to take part. If he does not return to Spain, he desires to reside at a hundred leagues from Paris."

Finally, on the second day of June, Berthier arrived at Mortefontaine, to communicate the decision of the Emperor: Joseph was to have the command of the Army of the Centre, and the government of that district; the command of the Army of the North would be given to a marshal more agreeable to the King than Bessières — perhaps to Jourdan; the general command of the armies in Spain could not be given to Joseph, or any one else, because the Emperor did "not see any man

capable of leading them." As for money, he would grant half a million a month up to the first of July, and a million a month for the balance of the year.

Joseph was far from satisfied with this arrangement, and wished to go to Saint-Cloud, where the Emperor had returned on the 4 June, to argue the matter. But Napoleon refused to discuss the question until after the fêtes.

On the 9 June, in his quality of French prince, Joseph attended the baptism of the King of Rome at Notre-Dame, and the fête at the Hôtel-de-Ville in the evening. He was not permitted to have any of his Spanish suite, and was accompanied by Jaucourt, as chamberlain, and Girardin, as écuyer.

The Emperor, in the end, refused positively to make any changes in the program which he had announced; but in other respects he displayed great generosity. When Joseph called, to make his adieux, on the 13 June, Napoleon made him a free donation of a million francs. In addition to this sum, Joseph raised 1,300,000 francs by mortgage upon Mortefontaine, the loan being made by his brother-in-law, Clary. On the 15th, he set out for Spain, after a very cold parting with his old friends, Rœderer, Girardin, and Jaucourt.

Once more, Napoleon had been the victim of the law of primogeniture, of the family spirit, the Corsican spirit — in a word, of the Spirit of the Clan. He had neglected his last opportunity to put an end to the deplorable state of affairs in the Peninsula, and thereby assure the future of his dynasty. Even if he wished to guard the northern provinces, on the left bank of the Ebro, by the abdication of Joseph the Emperor would have released for service elsewhere four-fifths of the quarter of a million men he had in the Peninsula; he would have averted the threatening catastrophe, for, after his departure for Russia, the command in Spain inevitably fell into the incompetent hands of Joseph. With his brother as general-in-chief, defeat and disaster were certain.

For his weakness, however, Napoleon is more to be pitied than to be blamed. With Lucien and Louis, he could be firm

and uncompromising; but, in the end, he always yielded to Joseph: it was in his flesh and blood, the result of his atavism and his education. If Napoleon had been the eldest, instead of the second son of Charles Bonaparte and Letitia Ramolino, the whole history of Europe might have been changed!

CHAPTER THIRTY-THREE

NOVEMBER 1809 — MARCH 1811

WESTPHALIA AND HANOVER

Jérôme at Paris — He Makes up with the Emperor — He Is Promised Hanover — His Order of the Crown — He Returns Home — New Demands — Napoleon's Second Thoughts — The Treaty Signed — Disappointment of Jérôme — State of His Finances — Benefits of His Rule — His Extravagance — The Cession of Hanover — Departure for Paris — Further Disagreements — Journey to Belgium — The Fêtes at Paris — Bankruptcy of His Kingdom — Return to Cassel — Trip to Hanover — The Emperor Occupies the Coasts — The Soldiers' Pay — Napoleon Wants Hanover Back — Submission of Jérôme — Decree of the 13 December — Jérôme Asks for Compensations — He Appeals to Napoleon's Affections — The New Treaty — Its Conditions — Proclamation of Jérôme — The Emperor Softens — His Reasons — He Had No Idea of Forcing Jérôme to Abdicate

FOLLOWING a series of quarrels with the Emperor, which had brought them almost to swords' points, Jérôme arrived in Paris on the 3 November 1809. More adroit and better balanced than either Lucien or Louis, he soon succeeded in regaining the good-will of his great brother. He took part in the negotiations with Lucien, and attended the Family Council which passed on Louis's request for a separation; in both instances he acted as the spokesman for the Emperor.

Taking advantage of his sojourn with the Emperor at the Trianon, during the ten days following the divorce, Jérôme obtained from his brother a favorable settlement of nearly all the matters which had been in dispute, including the restoration of Magdeburg, and the consolidation of his debts, with a term of five years for their liquidation.

At the same time (19 December), the Emperor carried his generosity so far as to announce his intention of ceding to Jérôme all of Hanover. But, Jérôme in return, during the con-

tinuation of the war with England, was to maintain 12,000 French soldiers, in addition to the same number already at his charge, and was to raise his contingent to 26,000 men. To these stipulations, the King made no objections, as it was his ambition to have as large an army as possible.

Finally, he obtained a favor which was very dear to his heart. For over a year, he had been making plans for the founding of an order on the model of the Légion d'honneur, to be known as the Crown of Westphalia, but the Emperor had withheld his consent. On the 25 December, the decree was issued; and the last day of the year, Napoleon wore the ribbon — an official sanction which he had not yet accorded to the orders instituted by Joseph, Louis, and Murat.[1] On New Year's day, Eugène, Cambacérès, and Champagny also appeared at the reception with the blue ribbon in their buttonholes.

Leaving Paris on the 2 January 1810, Jérôme and Catherine arrived in their capital four days later. Taking advantage of the favorable disposition in which he had left the Emperor, on his return home Jérôme wrote to make a number of new demands. He pointed out the irregularity of his frontiers, which should be rounded out, and the desirability of having an outlet to the sea. He also asked his brother to arrange the exchange of his grand-marshal, Meyronnet, "taken prisoner at Halberstadt, after the most obstinate defence, and having received two wounds."

In the matter of Meyronnet, the Emperor raised no objections; but the increase of territory was another question. Upon reflection, Napoleon had decided that the gift of Hanover, "of all of Hanover," as he had said, was too fine a present to make his brother. As we have already seen, the generosity of Napoleon was often tinged with a trace of meanness, which he had inherited from his mother. He wished to treat Jérôme fairly — even liberally; but he was not ready to make any gifts of

[1] The Royal Order of Spain, the Order of the Union, and the Order of the Two-Sicilies.

territory unless there was some profit to his Empire and his system. As Hanover was a land of horsemen, he would demand of the King six thousand cavalry, instead of twelve thousand infantry. Furthermore, he could cede only the *uti possidetis* of Hanover — not the sovereignty of Hanover, which would revert to England in case of peace.

Thinking that everything was understood, Jérôme had left behind him at Paris his Minister of Foreign Affairs, Lecamus, with orders to sign any treaty presented to him. On the 14 January, accordingly, Lecamus signed with Champagny a paper, which, at the last moment, the Emperor would not permit to be called a treaty, and which could not be published without his consent. This reservation was sure to be a great disappointment to Jérôme, who had calculated on the annexation of Hanover to float a new loan, and also to fix the date of his coronation. But there were other features upon which he had not counted: instead of the first of January, he was not to have possession before the first of April; the whole debt of Hanover was saddled on Westphalia; his contingent was fixed at 26,000 men — 20,000 infantry, 4000 cavalry, and 2000 artillery; besides other onerous features. Taking all the expenses into consideration, " it was an annual deficit of eight millions which the Emperor presented to his brother with Hanover." [2]

In the matter of territory, however, the Emperor was more liberal. He gave Jérôme six domains, covering 500,000 square miles, and containing 800,000 inhabitants, which carried his total population to 2,500,000 souls, and placed Westphalia, in the Confederation of the Rhine, in the same rank with Bavaria and Saxony. His kingdom was also extended to the coast, between the Elbe and the Weser.

Of all these arrangements, Jérôme was entirely ignorant, as his minister had not written him a word. Finally, on the 22 January, Lecamus arrived. For three weeks, the deputies, assembled at Cassel, had been awaiting the good pleasure of their sovereign, who in turn was awaiting that of the Emperor. Forbidden to reveal the contents of this mysterious treaty,

[2] 6 Masson, 23.

Jérôme, in his speech from the throne, at least gave some hints "of the advantages of high importance" accorded "by his august brother, the Emperor, to mark his particular interest in this kingdom, which he had founded." Thanks to these vague statements, the King found it easier to obtain appropriations which in a measure met the deficit in the budget, where unavoidable expenses of over forty-five millions were to be covered by expected receipts of less that thirty-five millions — rather an unstable equilibrium.

The favoritism and prodigality of Jérôme, the lightness and instability of his character, have led many writers to ignore, or undervalue, the very real benefits of his rule in Westphalia. In less than two years, this region, one of the most backward in Europe, had received and adopted all of the benefits of the French Revolution. The Code Napoléon had been definitely introduced; feudal rights had been suppressed; religious liberty had been recognized; the French system of roads and bridges had been adopted, and new routes were everywhere in course of construction; the prefectorial and municipal administration was similar to the French, but even more liberal. The enlightenment of the Nineteenth Century had succeeded the darkness of the Middle Ages; the ideas of equality, of personal liberty, of moral and material progress, had been implanted, and were never again to be uprooted. For all of these benefits, the youngest brother of the Emperor should be given some meed of praise.

After stating that Jérôme showed good sense when he presided over the meetings of his Council of State, and that he favored all of the French reforms, it must be admitted, however, that he gave but little attention to public affairs: most of his time was devoted to pleasure. In money matters he was prodigal to the last degree. In spite of his Civil List of five millions, soon to be carried to six, and the divers supplements which he grasped on every hand, his personal debts were in excess of two million francs. During his last trip to Paris, aside from the ready money which he had spent, he had bor-

rowed over three-quarters of a million. His principal thought was to spend — never to pay. He was a good pupil of Joséphine, whose protégé he had been in his youthful days. He had been too young to feel the days of want and privation through which the older members of his family had passed, and he had never learned to appreciate the value of money.

The act of the reunion of Hanover to Westphalia was signed on the 11 March 1810, to be effective from the first of that month. Jérôme was so anxious to obtain possession of his new domain, and set out for Paris for the marriage of the Emperor, that he paid no attention to the observations of his ministers that the Emperor had taken advantage of him in many points. For example, he was to be charged with the maintenance of 18,500 French troops, but Napoleon sent 3000 or 4000 more; the debt of Hanover was fourteen millions, instead of the one million stated by the Emperor, and so on.

Having succeeded in borrowing 300,000 francs, as pocket-money for his journey, Jérôme rejoined the Queen, who had left several days before, and arrived in Paris on the 16 March. The Hôtel Marbeuf, which had been assigned as his residence, was not large enough to contain his household of thirty persons, besides no end of domestics, and many of his suite were forced to secure lodgings in the neighborhood. He received a very cordial reception from the Emperor, who was pleased to have his family well represented at the fêtes.

The Emperor refused, however, to discuss business with Jérôme prior to his marriage; and he was even more inaccessible during the sojourn at Compiègne after the fêtes. He made fun of the insignia of the new order of Westphalia, saying that it was very ugly, and contained too many beasts; so Jérôme was forced to modify it. The Emperor also made a terrible scene over the appearance at Court of Jérôme's Minister of War, General Morio de Lisle, whom he treated as a coward, and a disgrace to his uniform. This tirade cruelly wounded Jérôme, who himself had authorized Morio, against the orders of his

commander, Saint-Cyr, to come to Compiègne, to enlarge his suite.

Disappointed at the outcome of his trip, Jérôme endeavored to find a plausible excuse to take his departure, without appearing to leave in bad humor. But, suddenly, "all of the clouds which had obscured their sojourn were dissipated," as Catherine wrote her father. The Emperor had need of a companion for Marie-Louise during the journey to Antwerp, and he decided that Catherine was the most suitable of the women of the family. The Emperor was accordingly very amiable toward Catherine, and wrote Jérôme (26 April), two days before his departure, that he would demand a report upon the finances of Hanover, and ascertain whether the sum of fourteen millions was really due: "in any case," he added, "I am disposed to reduce it, and to treat your country favorably."

Thus reassured, Jérôme dropped all of his cares, and proved the most charming of travelling-companions, always lively and gay, very attentive to the ladies of the party, and most liberal to the people on every occasion. "From his hands, there flowed a steady stream of jérômes; [3] of snuff-boxes bearing his portrait or his initials, and above all of crosses." At Brussels, he purchased laces to the value of 32,000 francs, as well as carriages and horses. At Ghent, he found himself so short of funds that he sent one of his suite to Cassel to secure the sums accruing on the budget up to the first of June.

Upon his return to Paris with the Emperor, the first of June, Jérôme took up his residence in the hôtel of Prince Eugène, Rue de Lille, where he entertained lavishly. On the 10th, he attended with Catherine the fête given by the City at the Hôtel-de-Ville, where, in his costume of white satin, covered with lace, pearls, and diamonds; with his toque of black velvet ornamented with white plumes, he had the air of a princess in disguise. At the Schwarzenberg ball, on the first of July, when nearly all of the guests lost their heads in the panic of the conflagration, he found the Queen, led her out into the garden,

[3] A Westphalian gold piece equivalent to the French napoléon (20 francs).

helped her over the wall, and conducted her to a place of safety.

It is difficult to realize that, at this time, Jérôme was not yet twenty-six years of age. During the past ten years, on at least seven or eight occasions, he had committed faults which, in the case of almost any other man, would have had most serious consequences. To him, they had brought a throne! There seemed to be a special Providence which watched over his steps.

At this moment, Jérôme received very disquieting reports from his ministers, who wrote that the Kingdom was on the verge of bankruptcy. In June, the crisis had been met by a loan of half a million francs, but no funds were in sight to cover the payments falling due in July, and the following months. The Emperor was keeping the entire revenues of Hanover, where, nevertheless, he was calling on Westphalia to maintain 6000 cuirassiers. It was a part of Napoleon's regular system to have his troops maintained so far as possible by his allies, and to make war by means of his auxiliaries. In vain Jérôme implored the Emperor to send home his division employed in Spain, and to order the evacuation of Westphalia by the French troops: he could obtain no satisfaction.

Disheartened by his sojourn, which had brought him only new expenses, and no promises of assistance, Jérôme left for home early in July. He travelled by way of Brussels and Cologne, stopping at Aix-la-Chapelle to see his mother and Pauline, who were taking the waters there. He reached Cassel on the evening of the 11 July.

On their return, the sovereigns remained hardly three weeks at Cassel. Jérôme was in haste to visit his second capital, and take possession of his new domains; so, on the 31 July, he set out, with the Queen and his entire Court. He established his headquarters at Herrenhausen, half a league from Hanover. The house, which was built of wood, was in bad repair, but there were beautiful gardens, on the model of Versailles, filled with rare trees and exquisite flowers. Here, the Queen passed

an agreeable week, while the King visited the principal cities.

On the 16 August, Jérôme wrote the Emperor, to beg him to lighten the burden imposed upon his kingdom by the support of the French troops. Two days later, before this letter had time to reach Paris, Napoleon himself wrote, to say that he had just given the order for his forces to occupy all the territory from Holstein to Holland, including the mouths of the Elbe and the Weser. Thus faded away the dream of Jérôme of having a seacoast; and, to make matters even worse, the marshal in command of all the French troops was Jérôme's implacable enemy, Davout.

This led to a running quarrel between the Emperor and his brother. The pay of the French troops was in arrears, and Jérôme was called on to furnish the funds, in accordance with the terms of the treaty. In vain he replied that his treasury was empty, and his Kingdom exhausted. The Emperor wanted to know why the King maintained such an expensive Court, and indulged in extravagances of every kind. Finally, he said: "As for Hanover, I have not ratified the act of cession. . . . I am ready to take it back, and regard the treaty as null, as it seems to you burdensome."

Napoleon was always an "Indian giver." He had no sooner done a generous act, than he regretted it. In neglecting to ratify the treaty, he had kept a pretext for taking back Hanover, if he was not satisfied with the arrangement. He was now looking for a good excuse to take this action, and continued to find fault with Jérôme on every occasion. No matter what the King did, he was always wrong.

On the 20 October, the Emperor directed Champagny to prepare for his signature a despatch declaring that, as the troops had not been paid, he regarded the treaty as null and void. He added that the King could continue to administer Hanover, but he did not consider himself any longer bound. Jérôme replied, in a very submissive letter, that he was always ready to make any sacrifices, if thereby he could "acquit in part the

sacred debt that the Emperor's kindness had imposed upon him, and which neither his heart nor his head could ever allow him to forget."

Several weeks of silence followed, and then, on the 10 December, Jérôme was notified that the Emperor proposed to annex to the Empire: from Westphalia, the entire department of the Weser, the territory the most populous and the richest of the kingdom; and from Hanover, one entire department, and parts of two others. To prevent any discussion, at the time that Jérôme received this announcement, the Senate had already adopted the decree (13 December) annexing these parcels to the French Empire.

Napoleon's excuse for this arbitrary action was that he did not regard himself bound, because "the Westphalian Government had not executed the stipulations of the treaty relative to the cession of Hanover"; therefore "the Emperor had only disposed of what belonged to him." As for the portions of the former territory of Westphalia, "they are more than compensated for by those of Hanover which remain to the King."

Taking into consideration only the figures of the populations, the reasoning of the Emperor was plausible. He had given Jérôme 594,000 subjects, and taken back 518,000 (227,000 from Westphalia, and 291,000 from Hanover); therefore the King still had 76,000 more subjects than in the beginning. But there were many other questions, such as the wealth and resources of the districts, the character and abilities of the inhabitants, and so forth. Some of these matters the Emperor promised to take into consideration, but these were the only concessions that he was willing to make.

The news of the Emperor's action was like a thunder-bolt to Jérôme. He at once wrote his brother to request that he might at least be compensated by some of "the small foreign territories enclosed within his States, such as the sovereignty of Lippe, Anhalt, the duchies of Saxony, the grand-duchy of Frankfort"; for, in losing the mouths of the rivers, he would

lose "the only thing which could give importance to his kingdom." "Your Majesty," he said, "cannot wish to humiliate me in the eyes of all Europe, in withdrawing your benefits without compensating me in an honorable manner, by bringing me nearer to you on the Rhine, in giving me some means of political existence, and a natural frontier." But he was not content with writing: he wished to rush to Paris, and have a personal explanation with the Emperor. Catherine and Lecamus were still trying to dissuade him from this step, when he received the *Moniteur* of the 15 December, containing the decree of the Senate, and realized that it was too late.

In vain, Jérôme wrote the Emperor letter after letter, asking for compensations: he obtained no satisfaction. He feared that the action of his brother was designed to force him to abdicate. His mother and Pauline advised him to be patient, and not to compromise his case further by going to Paris without the invitation of the Emperor. Friends at the capital wrote him that the Emperor said that it was not through dissatisfaction that he had taken from the King a fourth of his Kingdom, but because his policies forced him to do so. The Queen, Lecamus, and all his best advisers united their efforts to calm Jérôme and convince him that he had nothing to gain by bluster; that his true course was to appeal to the affection of his big brother.

From that moment, with real skill, Jérôme seized every occasion to reaffirm his submission, display his devotion, and render himself useful. In a long letter to the Emperor he said that his one desire was to please His Majesty; and, in case he made a mistake, a paternal counsel was more than sufficient, not only to cause him to change, but also to convince him of his error. "Why then is Your Majesty so sparing with your advice," he continued; "and why am I the only person who inspires so little interest that you are unwilling to write me what displeases you. In the critical situation in which I find myself, Your Majesty has not even deigned to say to me: 'Do what I wish: that will be agreeable to me.' It is by the

Moniteur that I learn that I am losing a quarter of my States, the third of my revenues, and the mouths of my rivers, without a single word coming from Your Majesty to reassure me, and to state that I should pursue such or such course of conduct. Admit, Sire, that Your Majesty is very severe toward one who has always desired, and who will ever desire, only to contribute to your satisfaction."

One would think that this appeal would have softened a heart of stone, but it had no effect on Napoleon. He merely announced that he would have another treaty prepared, but did not indicate the bases. In the meantime, although he had taken " a quarter of the Kingdom, and a third of the revenues," he demanded that Jérôme should still maintain, not only the 12,500 men stipulated in the original treaty, but the 6000 cuirassiers called for by the treaty of January 1810.

On the 9 March 1811, the Emperor made known to Champagny the terms which he proposed for the new treaty. He argued that, in ceding Hanover to Westphalia, he was giving much more than he took back: over 300,000 souls and 200,000 square miles, against 224,000 souls and 76,000 square miles — " that makes an enormous difference in favor of Westphalia, and compensates entirely for any discrepancy that there may be in the revenues." However, " to give a new proof of all his good-wishes for Westphalia," he consents to cede all that remains to him of the domains of which he has not already disposed. He claimed that this would give Jerome 224,000 francs additional revenue, but there were many deductions from this amount. He refused to give up Magdeburg — " a place of too great importance " — and would make no other concessions.

Such were the proofs which the Emperor gave of his " constant protection " to the kingdom which he had founded, and he expected Jérôme to be grateful!

In order to save his face, the King issued a proclamation to the " inhabitants of the Westphalian territory reunited to the Empire," releasing them from their oath of fidelity to himself, and praying them " to display to the Emperor and to France the same love, the same devotion, and the same fidelity, of

which they had so often given him the proofs." This may have been maladroit, but it hardly merited the caustic criticism of the Emperor, who considered the phraseology "presumptuous."

Then, all of a sudden, matters calmed down: it may have been the joy of the Emperor over the birth of the King of Rome, which softened him; but it was more probably the threat of a war with Russia, in which Jérôme and his army could be very useful to him. On the 18 March, Napoleon received the protests of the Czar against the occupation of the duchy of Oldenburg, and he immediately demanded of his brother one of his regiments to reënforce the garrison of Dantzic.

Finally, it remains for us to consider, whether Napoleon in his course regarding Westphalia and Hanover, was following the same procedure that he had adopted with Louis and Joseph, and was trying to force Jérôme to abdicate. It does not seem so. His policy was undoubtedly dictated by the necessities of his Continental System, which had led him, step by step, to take possession of all the seacoasts from Naples to the borders of Russia. He had taken back Hanover because he had need of it, and parts of Westphalia for the same reason. He had not notified Jérôme of his projects, because he wished to avoid unpleasant scenes, to which he might possibly have yielded. To conceal from his own eyes the hard and despotic features of his conduct, he had piled up against Jérôme his real and his imaginary grievances; but he had no idea of forcing him to abdicate.

CHAPTER THIRTY-FOUR

DECEMBER 1809 — JULY 1811

NAPOLEON AND MURAT

Murat's Visit to Paris — Opposition to the Austrian Marriage — Flying Trip to Naples — His Army — Lack of Money — Incapacity as Leader — Return for Marriage — Scene with the Emperor — Not Due to Caroline's Amours — Probable Cause — Murat Leaves for Naples — Prepares for Sicilian Expedition — His Forces — The Leclerc Mission — Anger of Murat — Failure of the Expedition — Murat Held Responsible — Discussions with the Emperor — Schemes of Maghella — Support of Murat — His Quarrels with the Queen — Alarm for His Throne — Rushes to Paris — Retained There — His Anxiety — Fears of Caroline — She Declines to Act as Godmother — Murat Restored to Grace — The Reasons — Return to Naples — Murat's Real Sentiments — Plots of His Minister — The June Decrees — Annulled by the Emperor — His Army of Observation — Orders to Grenier — Murat's Explanations — His Fever — Caroline Betrayed — Separation of the King and Queen — Reasons for Napoleon's Leniency — A Truce Declared

MURAT arrived in Paris on the 30 November 1809, and Caroline, on the second day of December. They were lodged in the Tuileries until the departure of the King of Saxony enabled them to move to their former palace of the Élysée. They were both strongly opposed to the Austrian marriage, as they saw in it a formidable obstacle to their ambition of wresting Sicily from the hands of the Bourbons, and reuniting it to their kingdom of Naples. Marie-Louise was the granddaughter of the former Queen of Naples, Marie-Caroline, to whom she was strongly attached. If this young girl were to secure any considerable influence over the mind of the Emperor, they might bid farewell for ever to their dream of conquest.

Accordingly, at the meeting of the council, called by the Emperor at the Tuileries on the 28 January, Murat expressed himself very strongly in opposition to an alliance which would

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"reawaken the memories of the Austrian woman [Marie-Antoinette] always odious to the nation."

Notwithstanding these words, which he explained as inspired only by his devotion to the Emperor, before he left Paris three days later, Murat succeeded in obtaining many favors from Napoleon. Besides a considerable reduction, both in the numbers of the duchies established in his kingdom, and in the figures of the dotations, he received permission to make some preparations for the Sicilian expedition: such as, to assemble the troops, and form them in camps. The Emperor reserved for future decision his consent to making the passage of the Strait. Well content at having partially gained his object, Murat took his departure. He left Caroline behind him, to look after their interests; and the Emperor invited her to take up her residence in the Pavillon de Flore, partly in order to have her near him, and partly in order to regain possession of the Élysée, which he had given to Joséphine as a city residence.

Murat made only a flying trip to his kingdom: arriving at Naples on the 14 February, he left again for Paris on the 10 March, to be present at the marriage fêtes of the Emperor. During this short stay, of a little more than three weeks, he visited Capua, where he reviewed his troops; he took measures for the suppression of "the brigandage subsidized by the *infamous* Caroline," and he began his preparations for the expedition.

Notwithstanding all of the favors which he and Caroline had received from the Emperor, Murat had always trembled for the safety of his throne. He had therefore taken steps, from the first, to strengthen his position at Naples. He had always had the passion for the command, and he could not consider himself really a king until he had an army under his orders. Unlike the brothers of the Emperor, who also dreamed of establishing their independence, he was not afraid to fill his ranks with French soldiers. His army, Neapolitan in name, was French in fact: all of the general officers, and the greater part of the commissioned officers, were French; while the ranks were largely recruited from soldiers who had been persuaded

to desert from the regiments of the Emperor. He drew them from every source, and loaded them with favors: nothing was too good for his soldiers.

With his name, his military glory, an army of 80,000 men, and 50,000 in reserve, Murat felt that his position in southern Italy would be assured, and his dynasty well established. He would be strong enough to attempt the conquest of Sicily, and would be a quantity to be reckoned with even by Napoleon himself. If the Bonapartes yielded meekly to their great brother; if he disposed of their provinces and their persons at his will, it was because they had no soldiers, no armies devoted to them, no military prestige. All of these elements of strength, Murat had, or at least thought that he had.

But, to maintain an army, the King needed a great deal of money, and he had but little. Like Jérôme, he borrowed on every hand, and never paid. He owed large sums in France: to the Treasury, to the Légion, to the Crown. To every request for payment, he always opposed some plausible pretext for delay. He claimed that he was orderly and economical; he was laying nothing aside, accumulating no private fortune: all that he received from his kingdom was spent for the public good, but especially for the army. In vain the Emperor wrote him that "the force of a state consists in having good and faithful troops, rather than many"; Murat had a mania for numbers, and was convinced that, led by him, his soldiers would accomplish miracles. But Murat's ideas of his powers of leadership were very exaggerated. On the field of battle, when actually in the presence of the enemy, he was magnificent; but his leadership of the cavalry in other respects left a great deal to be desired, and was often deficient in prudence and foresight.[1]

On his return to France, Murat travelled so rapidly that, in spite of the difficulty of the passage of Mont-Cenis in winter, he reached Paris in ten days (20 March). On his arrival,

[1] For example, during the first weeks of the Russian campaign (1812), he wore out the strength of his horses and men to such an extent that, before Smolensk was reached, the strength of the heavy cavalry had been reduced by a third, and that of the light cavalry by more than a half.

he found that the Emperor had just left for Compiègne, and he wrote to express his great desire to "place his homages at the feet of His Majesty." Napoleon authorized him to come; but he found the master in very bad humor. The Emperor, who was well-informed regarding all of Murat's acts during his absence, ordered him to return all of the soldiers taken from French regiments; and threatened, if he did not comply, to relieve him of command, and send a general to take it. Napoleon also announced that he would not pay an *écu* for the troops necessary for his kingdom, it being his principle that "the King pays those who are at Naples." He added: "In order to undertake the Sicilian expedition, you will need many troops, and certainly you will not make it with the Neapolitan forces."

During the second sojourn of the Court at Compiègne, after the marriage fêtes at Paris, there was a violent scene between the Emperor and Murat. The frequent allusions to the matter by Murat leave no doubts regarding the quarrel; but the cause of it is not clear, as no witnesses were present. There is therefore a wide field for conjectures, and some writers have imagined that the quarrel was due to new reports of the intrigues of Caroline, which had opened up an old sore.

It will be recalled that Caroline, during the absence of the Emperor in Poland in 1807, had become the mistress of Junot, at that time governor of Paris, because she thought that he might further her ambitious projects. A year later, when Napoleon was in Spain, she had had a liaison with Metternich, the Austrian ambassador, with the same objects in view. This connection she had not entirely given up, although, at Naples, she had become the mistress of La Vauguyon, the aide de camp, and intimate friend, of her husband. Metternich, now the Austrian Minister of Foreign Affairs, had returned to Paris for the Emperor's marriage, and was at present the lover of Madame Junot. To avenge herself, Caroline bought the minister's letters of a maid of Madame Junot, and delivered them to her husband. Junot, furious over this affair, gave his wife a beat-

ing, which kept her in bed for several days, and wished to provoke a duel with Metternich.

This story made the rounds of the salons of Paris; but it is possible that Napoleon was ignorant of the whole matter. The police were reluctant to inform the Emperor of all the gossip about his sisters, and Fouché was still the intimate friend of Caroline. Murat, also, was probably kept in the dark; and even if rumors came to his ears, his wife was shrewd enough to convince him of her virtue.[2]

It is probable, however, that it was not the conduct of Caroline, but the Sicilian expedition, which led to the quarrel. Apparently, Murat made the blunder of insinuating to the Emperor that it was the influence of Marie-Louise which made him reluctant to authorize the expedition. This violation of his fireside aroused the wrath of Napoleon, and he overwhelmed Murat with reproaches and charges which his brother-in-law never forgave or forgot.

When Murat left Compiègne, on the 10 April, he had not again entered into the good graces of the Emperor; but he had the assurance that the matter of his financial obligations would be arranged on easy terms,[3] and he had the almost definite promise that the expedition would be authorized. He left behind him Caroline, who, if she had failed in her program of dominating the young Empress, could at least look after their common interests, and keep him posted as to everything which took place at Court.

On his return to Naples (27 April), Murat began in earnest his preparations for the expedition. He was not discouraged in pursuing his plans, even when, a week later, a British frigate of 50 guns sailed into the Bay of Naples, sank one of his ships, swept the deck of another with a terrible broadside, killing or wounding nearly every officer on board, and drove the rest of his squadron in ignominious flight under the guns of the forts.

[2] See Avrillon, 1 *Mémoires*, 354; also Girardin, 2 *Journal et souvenirs*, 368, for fuller reports of this amusing episode.

[3] The treaty was finally signed on the 23 June.

On the 16 May, Murat set out for Calabria, where he was assembling his troops. His expeditionary force consisted of four divisions: the First, of 8500 men, was entirely French; the Second, also French, of 10,000; the Third, of 3500 men, under General Cavaignac, was nominally Neapolitan, but principally composed of Corsicans; the Fourth, of which the nucleus was the Royal Guard, was directly under the orders of the King. The major-general, or chief-of-staff, was General Grenier, who was appointed by the Emperor. For the traverse, there was a fleet of 780 small boats, collected from all the ports of the kingdom. The British squadron was composed of two ships of the line, four frigates, and eighty gunboats. On the 6 June, after a triumphal progress through his kingdom, Murat joined his camp in Calabria. Full of confidence, he wrote the Emperor: "Sicily will be conquered, the English will be beaten, or you will have lost your best friend."

The Emperor was far from being so optimistic: on the 23 May, he sent Colonel Leclerc, an aide de camp of Clarke, to inspect the preparations, and recommend that the expedition should not be undertaken unless there were means to transport 15,000 men at once, so as to assure success. In any event, the Emperor ordered that Gaeta should be prepared to sustain a siege of several months, so as to have a *point d'appui* in the Kingdom, in case of a reverse. These precautions exasperated Murat, who wrote that the expedition might as well be abandoned, as there were always some chances to run, and especially in a maritime expedition. But he soon recovered from his anger, and was, as usual, profuse in protests and apologies. The Emperor, with his large experience in the preparations for a descent on England, was certainly justified in advising caution; but Murat was certain that the reasons for the opposition to his plans were to be found in an understanding between Napoleon and Marie-Caroline.

At length Caroline, who remained in France until the first of September, succeeded in obtaining the reluctant consent of the Emperor, and the expeditionary force embarked on the night of the 17–18 September. A dead calm, following a vio-

lent storm, kept the British fleet in the harbor of Messina, and the division of General Cavaignac succeeded in effecting a landing at San Stefano, on the north shore of Sicily. But, owing to the indecision of Murat, or to secret orders given by the Emperor to Grenier, Cavaignac was left entirely unsupported. Attacked by an Anglo-Sicilian force, while the British ships threatened to cut off his retreat, he was compelled to reëmbark, leaving nearly a thousand men and officers in the hands of the enemy. The Emperor threw all the blame for this fiasco on Murat, who felt that the French officers were responsible; and the ill-feeling between the two brothers-in-law became more pronounced than ever.

After the failure of the expedition, Murat returned by sea to Naples, arriving on the 3 October. Caroline, who had been back for nearly a month, was just recovering from a very dangerous illness, which had brought her to the point of death. This, however, was the least of the troubles of the King. He was now convinced that the Emperor was opposed to any further attempts to capture Sicily, and that he must renounce the idea. This did not mean, as Murat imagined, that Napoleon had any understanding with Marie-Caroline, but simply that he did not wish to trouble the peace of mind of his wife's grandmother.

Another grievance that Murat had against the Emperor was an order just received from Paris that no French soldiers were, in the future, to be commanded by Neapolitan officers. Through his agents at Rome and Naples, the Emperor kept a careful watch over Murat's actions, and curbed at once any attempt to disregard his commands. He demanded the rigid enforcement of the Continental System, and that the duty on French silks should be removed. He refused to send an ambassador, or even a minister, to Naples; and would not allow Murat to accredit ministers to Vienna or Saint Petersburg.

Since the death of Salicetti, toward the end of 1809, the wily Genoese, Maghella, had become Minister of Police, and had soon acquired a great influence over Murat. Maghella detested the Napoleonic régime, and his head was filled with

grandiose schemes of a united Italy. During the first decade of the nineteenth century, he laid the plans for an independent nation, and anticipated by half a century the rôle which was to be played by Victor Emmanuel.

His ideas appealed strongly to the uneasy and dissatisfied Murat, who authorized him to open secret negotiations with the patriots in the principal cities of the Peninsula. It is doubtful, however, whether Murat at this time contemplated anything more than to ascertain what support he might expect to receive in case it proved necessary to defend his crown. But this was his first step down the dangerous slope which was to lead him to the treason of 1814.

At this same time, Murat requested the Emperor to send home the Italian contingent employed in Spain, and to reduce the French forces in Naples from 10,000 to 5000 men, on the ground that his kingdom was too poor to support such a large body of troops, and that his army of 40,000 Neapolitans was strong enough to repel any invasion which might be attempted by the English in Sicily. But Napoleon expressed the opinion that 12,000 British soldiers would make short work of his Italians, and refused either to return his troops from Spain, or to reduce the French forces in Naples.

While Murat was intriguing against his brother-in-law, Caroline was laying plots against her husband. Since her return from France, Murat's fears of her influence over his ministers had led him practically to exile her from his Court, and she spent the greater part of her time in the country. Naturally, Caroline resented this treatment, and she appealed to the Emperor. Her letters had considerable effect on the mind of Napoleon, who also had other grievances against Murat, because of his laxity in enforcing the Continental System, and his imposition of duties on French goods. The Emperor even went so far as to intimate to the Neapolitan ambassador at Paris that, if Murat did not amend his ways, " he would deprive him of his kingdom, and appoint a viceroy to govern it."

When this report reached Naples, Murat was so seriously alarmed that he rushed to Paris, under the pretext of conveying

to the Emperor his congratulations on the birth of the heir to the throne. Napoleon seemed to be satisfied with Murat's explanations; but, when the King spoke of returning to Naples, he invited his brother-in-law to prolong his visit; and it was the general impression, both at Paris and at Naples, that the Emperor meant to keep Murat in France. Such seems to have been also the opinion of Caroline, for she refused " with infinite regrets," on account of " the cruel and irreparable privation that her health imposed upon her," the invitation of the Emperor to act as one of the godmothers of the King of Rome. She was afraid that this high honor was only a lure to induce her to join her husband in Paris, in order that the Emperor might depose them, and annex their kingdom without trouble or scandal.

Certainly, if Napoleon had had any such perfidious scheme in mind, he could not have written Caroline in such cordial and affectionate terms. " My sister," he said, " I like to associate you with all the happy events of my life, and I wish you to be the godmother of my son, whose birth has overwhelmed me with joy. I hope that the health of Your Majesty will permit you to come to Paris, at an early date, for the ceremonies of the baptism, which are fixed for the second day of the month of June next; but, if this hope cannot be realized, I pray you to forward your proxy to the person to whom you wish to accord it. It will be very agreeable to me that these new ties, which will be formed between my son and my sister, shall be for the King of Rome another title to your affection."

But this letter did not reassure the treacherous Caroline, who naturally judged other people by herself; and her proxy was given to Hortense.

While Caroline, at Naples, was so despondent over their future, at Paris Murat had been restored to favor. The war with Russia was imminent, and the Emperor had need of his great cavalry leader. He even thought of instituting for Murat the charge of " Grand Master of the Cavalry of the Empire," the old Roman *Magister Equitum,* with a rank on a par with that of Constable of France. He had withdrawn nearly all of

the French forces from Naples, and he also counted on the 30,000 Neapolitans, whom he had formerly so despised, and of whom Murat was so proud.

On the 19 May, Murat received an invitation to join the Court at Rambouillet; and, at the same time, the Emperor charged Champagny to express to Durant, the newly appointed French ambassador to Naples, his surprise "to see a minister whom he accredited to a foreign Power raise a doubt as to the stability of the reigning sovereign; that his letter appeared to him without reason or discernment; that he was not charged to let him know whether it would be easy or not to change the government of Naples; that this doubt in itself was an outrage, and that he hoped that this was the last time that he would write in this vein."

Finally, the same day, the Emperor authorized Murat to return to Naples, and three days later he was on his way. He left behind him at Paris his travelling equipages, and wrote the Emperor: "When the moment of action arrives, an order from Your Majesty will suffice to have me fly to any place where I can be of service: two hours after the arrival of the courier I shall be on the way."

That these protests of devotion were not sincere, is abundantly demonstrated by the conduct of Murat after the Russian disaster; and further proof of his sentiments at this time may be found in a note written by Catherine. En route for Naples, Murat encountered a bishop who had been summoned to Paris, and was loud in his outrageous expressions regarding the French Court. "I have 45,000 men," he said, "and I can assemble 60,000: in view of the love of my people, they will find with whom they have to deal (*à qui parler*)."

Travelling with extraordinary speed for those days, Murat arrived in Naples on the 30 May. He found that, during his absence, Maghella had become deeply involved in a plot to throw off the French yoke in Italy. Through the agents of the Carbonari, he had sounded out the generals of Eugène in northern Italy; he had enlisted the discontented priests, with the promise of the delivery of the Pope, and the restoration of his

temporal sovereignty; he had begun negotiations with the English in Sicily, and with the Czar of Russia. The reports of the Imperial police, regarding all these preparations, are so detailed, that it is impossible to avoid the conclusion that they were well founded.

Playing upon the fears, the jealousy, and the pride of Murat, it was not difficult for the crafty Minister of Police to secure the support of the King. Why, he said, with only 10,000 French troops at Naples, did the Emperor maintain a large staff, comprising a marshal of the Empire (Pérignon), four major-generals, six brigadiers, and so on, unless he intended, some fine day, to substitute a military government for the royal government? Was not his wife sending false reports to the Emperor, with a view of securing the crown in his place? Was not his prestige, his military glory, at least the equal of that of the Emperor, if not superior? With these three factors, Maghella could lead him far.

Taking advantage of the absence of Marshal Pérignon, on the 7 June, a week after his return, Murat relieved him of the governorship of Naples, and gave the post to a lieutenant-general of his own choice. The Emperor was neither consulted nor advised; and, nearly three months later, was still ignorant of the change, as is shown by his letter of the 22 August to Clarke, the Minister of War: "Let me know if Marshal Pérignon is still governor of Naples, and in what position he is employed."

A week later (14 June), under the advice of his minister, Murat issued two decrees: the first directed, that all the foreigners employed in the Excise should be discharged on the first day of July, and replaced by Neapolitans; the second, required all Frenchmen holding any office, civil or military, under the Crown, to become naturalized Neapolitans before the first of August.

The results of this step were very disconcerting for Murat and his advisers. All of the French in his service, as well as those in the household of the Queen, immediately tendered their resignations, and he found himself threatened with the com-

plete disorganization of his Court, his army, and his civil administration. Moreover, the Emperor was furious, on hearing of this audacious act, and at once annulled it by an Imperial decree, dated the 6 July:

" In reference to our decree of the 30 March 1806, by virtue of which the kingdom of Naples became a part of the Grand-Empire; considering that the prince who governs this State is a Frenchman, and a grand dignitary of the Empire, and that he has been placed and maintained on this throne only by the efforts of our peoples, the Emperor decrees that: All French citizens are citizens of the kingdom of the Two-Sicilies, and the decree of the 14 June last is not applicable to them."

By a previous decreé, dated the 24 June, the Emperor had dissolved the Army of Naples, and formed a Corps of Observation of Southern Italy, consisting of a division of three brigades. The command was given to General Grenier, with the orders: " This Corps of Observation will remain always united; it can never be commanded except by French officers, and will never be employed, upon the request of the King of Naples, except in case of danger for the safety of his kingdom."

The pretext for this measure was the approaching war with Russia, which made it necessary for the Emperor " to assemble his troops." The corps would remain in Naples as long as the Emperor deemed it advisable; and, in the meantime, it was to be maintained entirely at the charge of the Neapolitan Treasury. In addition, by the French treaty with Naples, the King was obligated to furnish a contingent, and the Emperor wished to know what part of this contingent was ready to march. This demand was especially disagreeable to Murat, who had endeavored constantly to keep his troops under his own command.

It is true that these decrees of the Emperor were not printed, as usual, in the *Moniteur*, but they were officially promulgated, and were held suspended over the head of Murat. By a special courier, Grenier was notified that, " no matter what might be the opposition of the King of Naples, he was to give his orders to all the French; he was to assemble all of the troops of the Emperor between Naples, Capua, and Gaeta; without

making any fuss, he was to place a garrison in Gaeta, and assure himself of its possession; he was to make known to all the French, and to all who formed part of the Royal Guard, that they were always French, that the Emperor so considered them; that, by a decree of the Grand-Empire, the French are citizens of Naples."

These measures of the Emperor certainly presaged the dethronement of Murat, and the annexation of Naples to the Empire. What course would Murat take, under the circumstances?

His first letters, under date of the 18 and 29 June, were filled with protests of devotion, and apologies. But when he learned of the formation of the Army of Observation, and read the decree of the 6 July, he completely lost his head: he saw himself dethroned, arrested, conducted to France. On the 20 July, he wrote the Emperor a long letter, in which he covered the audacity of his falsehoods by solemn oaths, effusions of devotion, and a delirium of sensitiveness.[4]

He was so overcome by his feelings that, as previously at Madrid, he took to his bed, with a fever, real or imaginary. Not content with protesting his innocence of all charges, and his personal devotion to the Emperor, he revoked his decrees of the 4 and 14 June; he wrote Pérignon to return; he imagined every means of proving his fidelity; he promised to place himself entirely in the hands of the Emperor, of the French, and, above all, of Caroline, who would intercede for him, and save his crown.

At this moment, conjugal troubles came, to add to the King's woes. Maghella, in some way, had come into the possession of some very compromising letters of Caroline's, which proved her infidelity beyond a doubt. These, he laid before the King, and Murat "had a violent attack of fever, and it was feared that he would become mad." Notwithstanding his suspicions of his wife, and their many political differences, Murat had always maintained his marital relations with Caroline, but he now practically separated from her; exiled her to a country

[4] His letter is quoted in full, 6 Masson, 318–319.

estate; and was only prevented from taking more severe measures by the intercession of Baudus, the tutor of his sons. He deprived Daure of his portfolios of the War and the Navy; and La Vauguyon, the predecessor of Daure in the "secret corridor," chased from Paris by Napoleon, was met at Rome, on his way back to Naples, by an order to take command of the Neapolitan division in Spain.

While Napoleon was so severe toward his brothers, it is not easy to understand his leniency in the case of his brother-in-law, the only one to raise the standard of revolt, and affirm his independence. One reason was doubtless his affection for Caroline, who, since her marriage, had constantly shown herself the most serviceable and the most agreeable of his sisters. Another reason, and perhaps the stronger, was that Murat, the soldier, was useful, indeed almost indispensable, on the eve of a great war, and especially one in which the cavalry would play the chief rôle. To those generals who were important in his military plans, the Emperor always pardoned much, as witness his leniency toward Bernadotte, Masséna, and Soult. As a leader of cavalry, Murat was without a peer; and, since the death of Lasalle at Wagram in 1809, Napoleon had no other horseman to be compared to the King of Naples.

Therefore, peace was declared between the two brothers-in-law; but it was only a truce. As with Marie-Caroline in 1805, Napoleon was only deferring the day of reckoning; and Murat was awaiting a more favorable occasion to assert his independence, and betray his benefactor.

CHAPTER THIRTY-FIVE

JANUARY 1810 — JULY 1811

THE BONAPARTE PRINCESSES

MADAME — Her Cares — Sojourn at Aix — Negotiations with Louis — PAULINE — Her Character — Her Financial Affairs — Her Balls — Borghèse at Paris — The Fête at Neuilly — Liaison with Canouville — His Sable Coat — He Is Sent to Spain — Affair of Septeuil — Return of Borghèse — ELISA — Her Visit to Paris — Birth of a Son — Her Finances — Intimacy with Fouché — Return to Italy — Death of Her Son — Absent at the Baptism — JULIE — Her Stay at Plombières — Her Good Advice to Joseph — Residence at Mortefontaine — HORTENSE — At Plombières — At Aix-les-Bains — At Fontainebleau — Favors of the Emperor — Morganatic Union with Flahaut — CATHERINE — Her Devotion to Her Husband — Her Prodigality — Her Resentment against the Emperor

THE winter of 1810 was a very trying season for Madame Mère. Following the extended visit from Louis, which upset all of her household arrangements, there came the climax of the long quarrel between Napoleon and Lucien, which tore her heart with anguish. Although she was present, the first of April, at the civil and religious marriages of the Emperor, and the great banquet at the Tuileries, she did not attend the other fêtes, as Lolotte, who was her guest, was not invited. Worn out by so many family cares, and once more disappointed at the Emperor's refusal to increase her allowance, or give her the title of Empress Dowager, at the beginning of May she asked permission to go to Aix-la-Chapelle, for a rest, and to take the waters, which had always helped her. She was forced, however, to await the return of the Emperor from Antwerp, to obtain his consent; and her departure was also delayed by one of her attacks of *migraine*, her only malady, which was due to her excessive use of cosmétiques. She finally set out the middle of June, accompanied by Pauline, and a small suite of five or six persons.

At Aix, she received a short visit from Jérôme and Catherine, on their way home to Cassel; and she was there when the news came of the departures of Louis and of Lucien. At first, she did not know what had become of either one of them; but at the end of a fortnight she learned that Louis was safe in Bohemia. No news came of Lucien, however, for many weeks, and it was November before she heard definitely that he was at Malta.

After her return to Paris, the latter part of August, Madame took part in the negotiations of Decazes with Louis, and the conferences with the Emperor at Fontainebleau, with the view of persuading Louis to return to France; but, as we have already seen, all of her hopes were disappointed. To add to her troubles, there were the muddled affairs of Joseph and Jérôme; the growing influence of Madame de Montebello over Marie-Louise; and the conviction that the new Empress had acquired, over the mind of Napoleon, a power more to be dreaded than the charms of Joséphine. The Family had lost most of its potent spell over the spirit of Napoleon!

Of the three Bonaparte sisters, Pauline was by far the most interesting and the most attractive. To the beauty and the eroticism of a Greek goddess; to the caprice of her amours, and her absolute disregard of the modern *convenances* of dress and behavior, she joined a filial piety, a sisterly devotion, and a strong sense of the Family spirit.

At the present moment, she was happy to be separated from her husband, who was agreeably occupied at Turin with his duties as governor-general; and also to be free from her latest lover, Blangini, whom Jérôme had employed as chapel-master. To make her perfectly contented, it only remained for her brother to assure her financial position. Up to this time, she had received, on account of her transfer of Guastalla to the Emperor, only 700,000 francs in revenue, and she had debts. This matter, however, was about to be arranged: on New Year's day (1810), Napoleon made her a present of 800,000 francs, accompanied by a note, reading, " Arrange that I may no longer hear it said that you have, and think that you have,

given me Guastalla." This gift was followed, the middle of January, by two more donations, totalling 800,000 francs. This, by the way, was three or four hundred thousand francs more than Napoleon had promised her on the first of March 1809.

But if the Emperor gave liberally, it was with the tacit understanding that she should spend on the same scale. He demanded that his sister should give balls; and, from January to March, Pauline gave ten, which cost her altogether about twenty thousand francs. This sum seems small, but it was not then the fashion to have flowers: there were few expenses aside from the supper, the lights, and the orchestra of Julien, the most celebrated of the day, which cost only five napoléons for the evening. The small size of Pauline's hôtel limited the number of guests, who were drawn from the lists of the Emperor: it was necessary that all of the women should be beautiful, and the men, young and handsome. The incidental expenses, for robes and jewels, however, were heavy: to adorn her beauty, in this winter of 1810 Pauline purchased of a single jeweler over a quarter of a million of diamonds and other gems.

When Borghèse arrived in Paris, for the marriage of the Emperor, he met with a very cold reception from his wife. The capital was so crowded with visitors, who had come for the fêtes, that she was forced to offer him an apartment in her hôtel, but she informed him that he would be expected to pay all the expenses of his visit. In obedience to the Emperor's orders, she appeared occasionally in public with him, but it was with the worst possible grace.

Of the many fêtes in honor of the Emperor's marriage, the most splendid was that given by Pauline at Neuilly, on the 14 June. From eight o'clock in the evening until midnight, without a moment of repose, one surprise was followed by another; and the magnificence of the entertainment was talked of for months afterward. But there was considerable public comment on the amount of money thus "squandered in a few hours"; and the Emperor, to disarm the popular discontent, ordered the fête repeated for the benefit of the Parisian bour-

geoisie. These two entertainments cost the Princesse close to one hundred thousand francs.

At the end of the fêtes, Pauline was in haste to depart for Aix, to rejoin her mother, and to be free from the presence of her husband. After a short sojourn at Aix, she went to Spa, where she could enjoy greater liberty, and returned to Neuilly on the eve of the Emperor's fête (15 August).

At Neuilly, Pauline secluded herself from all the world: the park was closed to all strangers — even to the members of her household. In the case of Pauline, this meant that she had begun a new romance. The happy man, this time, was Armand de Canouville, the handsomest and the most foppish of the aides de camp of Berthier. Canouville, who was then just twenty-five years of age, belonged to an old family of Normandie, and was a nephew of Senator Sémonville. Entering the Army at the age of seventeen, he had risen in seven years to the rank of major, with a position on the staff of the Prince de Neuchâtel. In the armies of the Empire, he recalled the traditions of the days of the Grand Monarque. He was a man of education, of refinement; an accomplished dancer, as much at home in the ball-room as on the field of battle.

On the 25 September, Pauline joined the Court at Fontainebleau, where the vice-constable also appeared, with four of his aides de camp, among whom was Canouville. For a time all went well, and the Emperor was well pleased with the Thursday evenings when the Princesse Pauline received the Empress and the Court. The latest affair of Pauline had been in progress several weeks, without any rumors coming to the ears of the Emperor, due no doubt to the excellent understanding which seems to have existed always between his sisters and the chiefs of the police. Then, the liaison became known to him quite by accident. As the story is told, Napoleon had presented to his sister one of three superb sable coats which the Czar had given him at Erfurt, two years before; and Pauline, in turn, had bestowed the pelisse upon her new admirer, together with some diamond buttons, also a gift of the Emperor. The infatuated swain is said to have worn this pelisse at a review held by the

Emperor at Fontainebleau, and it was at once recognized by him as his gift to Pauline. There was an immediate explosion; and Berthier was ordered to send his aide de camp to Spain, as a bearer of despatches. The latter part of the tale is the only part that bears any semblance of truth. There is no record of any review held by the Emperor during the sojourn of the Court at Fontainebleau; but some reports seem to have reached Napoleon, and he doubtless called his sister to account. She resented his interference with her affairs, and departed suddenly for Paris, leaving a note in which she attributed her flight to ill-health. There must have been some good reason for her leaving so precipitately, four days before her mother, and ten days before the departure of the Emperor (16 November).

However this may all be, on the 9 November, the Emperor wrote Berthier to send one of his officers to Spain, with orders not to return without news of the Army of Portugal. Canouville was not designated by name, but Berthier may have had verbal instructions. In any event, the major received orders, the same day, to leave at once, as bearer of despatches to Masséna.

On his arrival at Salamanca, Canouville learned that it was impossible to communicate with the army in Portugal, and that many days must elapse before he could hope to execute his commission. After discussing the matter with his good friends, General Thiébaut and Mme. d'Abrantès, the following morning he set out, without escort, to traverse again the six or seven hundred leagues which separated him from his inamorata in Paris. But, he had no sooner reached the capital than he received a peremptory order to depart again for the Peninsula, and carry out his instructions. Without a moment of repose, he once more took the route for Spain, and, on his arrival at Salamanca, found a companion in misfortune, who was also an aide de camp of Berthier.

This new victim of Pauline's amours was Achille de Septeuil, two years younger than Canouville, but as elegant and as popular. By the irony of Fate, he had been exiled because he did

not love Pauline enough, while Canouville had been disgraced because he loved her too well!

Among the ladies-in-waiting of the Princesse de Borghèse was a certain Mme. de Barral, who had been highly honored and esteemed by Pauline, although she was young and beautiful. Pauline had only recently given this lady a proof of her attachment by ridding her of her elderly and jealous husband, whom she persuaded Jérôme to appoint one of his chamberlains at Cassel. Mme. de Barral was seven years older than Septeuil, but he had conceived for her a violent passion. Pauline seems to have overlooked this little love-affair, in the blindness of her own intrigue, until she herself cast longing eyes upon Septeuil, and gave him to understand that he might console her during the absence of his friend. But Septeuil was faithful to his mistress, and, for once in her life, Pauline found her favors disdained. The young aide de camp was soon to learn that Her Imperial Highness was no exception to the old saying that

> " Heaven has no rage like love to hatred turned,
> Nor hell a fury like a woman scorned."

Pauline informed the Emperor that the attentions of Septeuil to Mme. de Barral were causing a scandal which she could no longer tolerate in her household, and begged him to interfere.

The consequence was that Mme. de Barral lost her position in Pauline's household, and was exiled to her husband's country-seat, while Septeuil was sent to Spain, with orders to join the Army of Portugal, as soon as communications were reëstablished. At the battle of Fuentes de Onoro (May 1811), he received a wound which necessitated the amputation of his leg, and he was honorably retired from active service. Some time later, Mme. de Barral succeeded in securing a divorce from her aged husband, and espoused her young lover.

Pauline returned to Paris, in the autumn, rather subdued over the outcome of her latest romance; but she at once resumed her relations with Canouville, who remained for some time her favorite adorer. With Lent, Borghèse appeared in

Paris, and took up his residence in the hôtel of the Faubourg Saint-Honoré. This was far from pleasing to Her Imperial Highness; therefore, as soon as she could leave town, she established herself at Neuilly, the last of April. There, she could be free from the proximity of her husband, and could see Canouville more frequently. In the meantime, Borghèse, who had been present at the Tuileries on the occasion of the birth of the King of Rome, had been taken into the good graces of Marie-Louise, and was included in all of the invitations of the Court. Pauline, who claimed that her health was more delicate than usual, at first asked permission to pass a year in the South; then, she changed her mind, and departed with her mother, for Aix-la-Chapelle, on the 25 June, as soon as she could get away after the fêtes of the baptism.

Early in March 1810, although she was five months enceinte, Élisa set out for France, to be present at the Emperor's marriage. Prince Félix was permitted to escort her as far as the first post-house, but was not allowed to accompany her to Paris. She had no idea of having him share her glory: it was enough for him to pass as the father of her children. But her suite, which filled seven carriages, was so numerous that Bacciochi was not missed.

On her arrival at Paris, Élisa was installed at first in the Petit-Luxembourg, but she soon moved to the former home of Joseph, the Hôtel Marbeuf. As she was fatigued from her journey, she did not go to Compiègne, but she was present at Saint-Cloud to receive the Empress on the 30th, and attended the ensuing fêtes. "The Grand-Duchess of Tuscany is very intelligent," Marie-Louise wrote her father; "she is ugly, but she has a daughter, three years old, who is the most beautiful child that I have ever seen."[1]

After the departure of the Emperor and Empress for Belgium, she visited her mother, but saw little of her two sisters, for whom she had little affection. On the 3 July, at the Hôtel

[1] This was Napoléone-Élisa, born 6 June 1806. (See Biographical Notes.)

ÉLISA BONAPARTE

Marbeuf, she gave birth to a son, who received the names of Jérôme-Charles, in honor of the King of Westphalia, who was the godfather. Next to Lucien, of whom she had seen little of late years, Élisa seems to have preferred Jérôme to any of her family, although they had but little in common.

During her stay in Paris, Élisa was treated with great consideration by the Emperor, but with little generosity. In announcing to the Emperor her "expectations," she had written: "If Fate grants my most ardent wishes, I shall present to my august brother a nephew worthy of his name and his glory; but, however this may be, at least I may flatter myself that the child, inheriting the sentiments which inspire its mother, will rival her in love and devotion for Your Majesty." In writing these flattering words Élisa doubtless hoped that the Emperor would continue her allowance of 240,000 francs; but, in this expectation, she was doomed to disappointment: her allowance was suppressed, to date from the first of January 1810. Her trip to France had cost her 80,000 francs; [2] but, beyond presenting her with a portrait of himself, set in diamonds, which cost 50,000 francs, and some gifts of Sèvres to her ladies, the Emperor gave nothing. Worse still, Napoleon took advantage of her visit to demand a settlement of the annual indemnity, which she had agreed to pay in 1806, upon Carrara and two other domains ceded to her. This meant 200,000 francs of revenue which he demanded of her. Élisa was too adroit to resist her brother openly, but she employed her usual tactics, and asked for time. She was so upset that she cut short her visit, and gave up the plan of going to see Jérôme in August. To console her brother for her absence, she sent her lover, Cenami!

Before her departure, Élisa was mixed up in an intrigue in which we could hardly expect to see her involved. Formerly, she had been the declared foe of Fouché, and had desired, even if she had not actively contributed to, his first disgrace. But more recently, Fouché had been of service to some of her friends, and a kind of reconciliation had taken place. Although

[2] Masson says 800,000, but this seems incredible. (See 6 Masson, 271.)

Talleyrand and Fouché had both been dismissed by the Emperor, Élisa was intelligent enough to recognize the fact that they had immense powers, either for good or evil, and that it was wiser to keep on good terms with them.

When Fouché, after a final audience with the Emperor, decided to leave France, he rushed to see Élisa, and asked of her letters for her grand-duchy, which she accorded with infinite grace. Then, she actively interested herself in the affairs of the former Minister of Police; persuaded the Emperor to receive his wife, and to authorize him to travel in Italy. Later, she secured from the Emperor a permit for Fouché to take up his residence at Aix. By these services, Élisa made a firm ally of the man who was destined to play one of the principal rôles in the downfall of the Empire.

Returning to Tuscany at the beginning of September, Élisa found herself confronted with a serious crisis. As the result of the bad harvests of the year, the price of bread had risen so high as to be beyond the reach of the poorest classes, and riots were feared at Leghorn and several other places. By regulating the price of bread, she alleviated to some extent the misery which had prevailed. She seemed to think that these services would soften the heart of the Emperor, in the matter of the unpaid indemnity; but Napoleon proved obdurate, and even threatened to seize Carrara if the debt were not promptly liquidated.

In the spring of 1811, Élisa suffered a severe blow, in the death on the 17 April of her baby boy. The little prince was buried at Lucca, in the Church of San Paolino, to which, some three months later, Élisa transferred the remains of her eldest son, the little Félix-Napoléon, who had died in 1799 at Marseille.

With all her faults, Élisa was an affectionate mother, and she seems to have felt acutely the loss of her child. Her physicians recommended a change of scene and air, and she solicited the permission of the Emperor to go to Paris, where she "hoped to find in the bosom of her family, assembled for the baptism

of the King of Rome, some consolation for the sorrow which had recently overwhelmed her." But her brother refused his consent, and advised a course of sea-bathing at Leghorn. It is possible, however, that Napoleon, who was not entirely free from Corsican superstition, may have feared that the presence, at the baptism, of one who had just lost her son might bring bad luck to his own heir: " Surtout qu'elle n'apporte point au Roi de Rome le mauvais œil."

Having sketched briefly the lives of Madame and her daughters during the trying period of the Emperor's second marriage, we shall now outline the rôles played by the three sisters-in-law, Julie, Hortense, and Catherine.

The task of Julie, as an intermediary between her husband and the Emperor, was perhaps the most difficult of all. Her advice to Joseph showed once more her excellent head for affairs; if he had listened to her, he would long since have taken the only course compatible with his dignity, and which would have assured the termination of the war: he would have returned to live quietly as a French prince at Mortefontaine, with his wife and daughters. But Joseph was stubborn, and Julie's health was too fragile for her to press the matter. She had the mania for baths, so prevalent at that time, and weakened her constitution by her abuse of thermal waters. For instance, this season, she remained at Plombières from April to August, and took three courses of baths, one after the other. But she was too sensible to pay any attention to the repeated orders of Joseph, to dispose of their properties in France, and invest the proceeds in foreign securities. She awaited the course of events, hoping that matters would take a more favorable turn; in the meantime, she intervened on several occasions, and endeavored to calm, alternately, her husband and her brother-in-law. She visited the Court as rarely as possible, and passed most of her time at Mortefontaine, where she had for company: her sister Désirée, now the crown-princess of Sweden; her daughters, whose education occupied much of her time; besides quite a family of nieces and cousins, as well as several friends.

It was a very quiet and peaceful existence, which suited perfectly the domestic tastes of the Queen of Spain.

When Louis abdicated his throne, and went into exile, Hortense was at Plombières, taking the waters. The action of the Emperor, in annexing Holland, and sending for her elder son, relieved her of the necessity of assuming the regency, or of going herself to Holland, to secure her boy. By orders of the Emperor, a disquieting note regarding her health was inserted in the official journal, and two ladies and a chamberlain were sent to join her: her sojourn was thus rendered official, and the public mind was prepared for the separation. She made no response to the pitiful letter from Louis, announcing his departure from Holland, and, in her letters to the Emperor, showed no signs of compassion or regret: she was only too happy to be free!

Her health had improved, since her arrival at Plombières early in June, and she made some excursions, but she saw no one except Julie. On the arrival, later, of Mme. de Souza, and her son, Charles de Flahaut, she made an exception in their favor; and it was Flahaut, rather than Joséphine, whom she went to rejoin at Aix-en-Savoie, the end of July.

On her arrival at Aix, Hortense was "pale, thin, very downcast, ready at every moment to burst into tears, without knowing why." But soon, this "dying woman" was well enough to make long excursions. No doubt, it was the presence of her beloved Charles which had wrought this improvement in her condition. With the exception of visits to Lausanne and Geneva, she remained at Aix throughout August, and the first fortnight of September. Then, she wished to join her mother in a trip through Switzerland, but was called to Fontainebleau by an order of the Emperor. When she arrived there in October, she had not seen the little Louis since May, nor Napoleon since June. Only her passion for Flahaut can explain this neglect of her children in a mother as devoted as Hortense.

At Fontainebleau, like Pauline, she had her separate apartment, where she received once a week the Empress and the

Court. With her usual tact, she established cordial relations with Marie-Louise, but there was no particular intimacy at this time between her and the successor of her mother. The Emperor formally gave her the guardianship of her children, and granted her request that Joséphine should be permitted to return to France, to reside at Navarre. On the 6 November, the Emperor gave her as a "French princesse," a household, with chamberlains and écuyers, the same that she had enjoyed as the "Princesse Louis." By two decrees, in November and December, the Emperor also attributed to her the appanage of Louis as a French prince: two million francs a year, besides the revenues of the grand-duchy of Berg, 650,000 francs.

On her return to Paris, Hortense took up her residence in the hôtel, Rue de Cerutti, where, on the 15 November, she celebrated her fête day.[3] Flahaut was present on this occasion, as indeed on all others, for he was now established in the household almost as lord and master. This was not an ordinary liaison, such as formed too often by the Emperor's sisters, but a serious engagement, a kind of *mariage de convenance,* entered into for life. On the part of Hortense, there was passionate devotion; in the case of Flahaut, more gratitude than love.

Catherine was a woman of the highest character, absolutely devoted to her husband, whom she loved passionately — even to the extent of pardoning his many lapses from conjugal fidelity, and acting as godmother to his illegitimate children. Except for his notorious infidelities, however, Jérôme was the most gallant, the most attentive, and the most generous of husbands. If he gave to his favorites, he also made to his wife the most munificent presents, all chosen with care, and in excellent taste.

Her only fault was her prodigality, in which she equalled her husband; and, strange as it may seem, Jérôme, who never settled his own debts, paid those of his wife.

The Emperor, who had gained her love by his kindness at

[3] Sainte-Eugénie, as there is no Hortense in the calendar.

the time of her marriage, had fallen gradually in her esteem. When he took away Hanover, and part of Westphalia, she was even more indignant than Jérôme: she resented it, like an outraged princess. Her letters to her father show how profoundly she was wounded, and she submitted with less good-grace than Jérôme.

CHAPTER THIRTY-SIX

MARCH 1811 — JULY 1832

THE KING OF ROME

Birth of the Heir to the Throne — The Emperor's Bulletin — Assembling of the Family — Madame's Sentiments — Napoleon's Arbitrary Decrees — His Favors to Eugène and Hortense — The Queen at the Ceremonies — Her Interesting Condition — Napoleon's Unwieldy Empire — Title of the Prince Imperial — His Apartment at the Tuileries — Napoleon's Project for a Palace at Chaillot — The *Ondoiement* at the Tuileries — Baptism at Notre-Dame — Evidences of Napoleon's Waning Popularity — Public Dislike of the Empress — Portraits of the King of Rome — His Resemblance to Marie-Louise — No Likeness to Napoleon in Form or Feature — His Intellect and Character

AT TEN o'clock, on the morning of Wednesday, the 20 March 1811, the Parisians heard the first discharge of the guns of the Invalides, which announced the birth of a Child of France. All traffic in the streets ceased, and every one rushed to the doors or windows of the houses and shops, to count the strokes. On every side, one could hear the numbers repeated: "three, four, five," and so on. There was an interval of a minute between each discharge. Twenty-one guns would proclaim the birth of a daughter; one hundred and one, the arrival of the longed-for heir of the Grand-Empire — the King of Rome. After the twenty-first, there was a profound silence; but, at the twenty-second there were spontaneous cries of: *Vive l'Empereur!*

The joyous signal, inaugurated by the triumphal battery, was taken up and repeated by cannon near and far, from the guns of Dantzic on the north to those in the trenches before Cadiz and Torres-Vedras on the south; from Cap Finistère to the eastern frontiers of the Grand-Duchy of Warsaw. While the half of Europe that acknowledged the domination of

Napoleon was listening to these salvos, which announced the coming of his son, and the perpetuation of his race, he himself was engaged in drafting the bulletin of this supreme victory which he had gained over Destiny. It was in the same style in which he announced battles won, cities taken, and kingdoms overthrown. He told of the sufferings of the Empress, and the birth of his son, in all the crude details. In a few hours, chamberlains and écuyers were rushing to all the capitals of his vassals and his allies — to Cassel, Vienna, Milan, Florence, Naples, Madrid. The kings of his family were the only ones to receive the bulletin. To the Emperor of Austria, and the King of Spain, he said: " Having the project of deferring the baptism of the child for six weeks, I am charging the chamberlain, who will carry this letter to Your Majesty, to bear another, praying you to be the godfather of my son."

Within a few days, there were assembled at Paris nearly all the members of the Imperial family. Without awaiting the permission of the Emperor, Murat rushed from Naples. After some hesitation, Joseph set out, in great state, from Madrid, to fulfill his rôle of godfather. The other godfather, the Emperor of Austria, was represented by his brother Ferdinand, the Grand-Duke of Würzburg, who had arrived in Paris a few days before the accouchement. Jérôme came from Cassel; Madame and Pauline were already in Paris. The only members of the family who were not present were: Louis, in voluntary exile in Austria; Lucien, interned in England; Élisa, who could not obtain the consent of the Emperor; and Caroline, who feared that the invitation to act as godmother was a trap to detain her in France.

With the possible exception of Murat, however, it cannot be said that the " Napoléonides " came with good-grace: they were so crabbed that one would have declared they were united for a funeral ceremony, rather than the most memorable fête of the Family. Madame, in particular, does not seem to have manifested any joy over the birth of her grandson. She

was much offended, when she paid her first visit to Marie-Louise, to find that the spiteful lady of honor, Mme. de Montebello, had ordered all of the armchairs removed from the room of the Empress; she was therefore forced to occupy an ordinary chair, and some of the queens were obliged to stand. At the same time, Madame displayed much grief over the death of the little Jérôme, the son of Élisa; and she was greatly discouraged over the other quarrels in the Imperial family: the exile of Louis, the fate of Lucien, the probable abdication of Joseph, the disagreements between Jérôme and the Emperor, and the open affronts put upon her by Marie-Louise. Nevertheless, she appeared at the baptism, on the 9 June, as godmother, with Hortense, who took the place of Caroline; but she was absent, as well as Julie, on the plea of ill-health, from the Imperial banquet, given at the Tuileries a week later. Her only thought was, to leave as soon as possible, with Pauline, for Aix-la-Chapelle, where she arrived early in July.

One consequence of the baptism was the unbearable increase in the vanity and pride of Napoleon. It was evident to all observers that the Family no longer counted in the heart and the mind of the master; and this fact was soon to be decisively proved by the series of arbitrary decrees which affected the interests of all the Napoleonic kings who were permitted to guard their thrones. Joseph's attempts at independence, Jérôme's essays at emancipation, and Murat's revolts were all curbed with an iron hand.

The first decree, of the 22 June, provided that, in the future, all princes of the family, called by the Emperor to foreign thrones, should be treated as French princes in the interior of the Empire; that they should wear no costume except that of a French prince, no other cockade than the French; and receive no honors, civil or military, other than those determined by the decree of the 24 messidor an XII (13 July 1804).

The terms of this decree were further aggravated by a new decision regarding the palace etiquette, rendered on the 12 Sep-

tember: The queens lost all rights to the armchair, left only to Madame in consideration of her age; they could have the use only of a camp-stool, except in case they were enceintes; the princes and princesses, in the interior of the Empire, could have no more than six horses attached to their carriages, and could no longer have any escort. Finally, on all ceremonial occasions, when the Emperor was upon his throne and under the dais, only the Emperor and the Empress were to have armchairs; all the other personages — princes, princesses, and grand dignitaries — were to stand, placed according to their ranks.

After the kings and princes, the Emperor struck at their French adherents, in a decree which was even more severe. All Frenchmen naturalized in foreign countries, without the permission of the Emperor, would suffer the loss of their property, of their titles and decorations, and their rights of succession; if found upon French territory, they would be conducted to the frontier; and, if they again returned, would be liable to an imprisonment of from one to two years. All of these provisions, of which only a brief résumé is given above, applied particularly to the Frenchmen who had followed the fortunes of Joseph, Murat, and Jérôme. These decrees brought directly under the discipline of the Emperor the Courts of all the Napoleonic sovereigns, and incidentally, by the same stroke, practically destroyed the fiction of the Grand-Empire — a consequence which the Emperor was far from anticipating.

While the Family was thus being confounded and abased, the only persons who received from the Emperor new favors, and a cordial welcome, were the children of the deposed Empress. Of his own accord, Napoleon offered, with the Empress, to hold at the baptismal font the child whom the vice-reine had brought into the world on the 9 December 1810, and who, by his orders, received the names of Auguste-Napoleon.[1] He

[1] This son of Eugène's married at Lisbon, 23 January 1835, Dona Maria, the Queen of Portugal, and died, under tragic circumstances, the 28 March of the same year.

called Eugène to Paris for the delivery of the Empress; permitted him, for the first time, to occupy his hôtel of the Rue de Lille; and made him, with Borghèse, witness of the birth of the King of Rome.

By a decree, under date of the 24 April, the Emperor put Hortense in full possession of the appanages refused by Louis. He also made her an allowance of 120,000 francs for the maintenance of Prince Louis, in addition to the sum of 650,000 francs from the revenues of Berg, attributed to her elder son. In brief, Hortense, with a city mansion and a country château, with an income of nearly three millions, was better provided for than Madame herself.

At the baptism of the King of Rome, Hortense figured as the second godmother, as the Emperor had given her the procuration of Caroline; and his gifts to her, of Gobelins and Sèvres, were nearly as handsome as those made to Madame. When she left for Aix-en-Savoie, in July, her two sons were lodged in the Pavillon d'Italie at Saint-Cloud, under the direct eye of the Emperor, with a governess, an écuyer, and a chamberlain.

In those days of clinging robes, which outlined and revealed the entire form, it is difficult to understand how Hortense managed to conceal a pregnancy of five months. Although she was constantly in the public eye, present at every one of the fêtes, we find no allusion to her condition in any of the letters or memoirs of the times.

The baptism of the King of Rome marks the culminating point of the good fortune of Napoleon, the apogee of his reign. At the moment that he thought that he had assured the future of his dynasty, his feet were already on the descending slope which was to lead him to the fathomless abyss. It was at this time, when the formidable extension of the territory of the Empire rendered it ungovernable by the power of any one man, no matter how able, that he endeavored to gather all the reins into his own hands; to suppress all initiative; discourage support, and make passive obedience the first, the only virtue, of his servants. "If," says M. Masson, "he had been able, on

the 20 March, by the telegraph of Chappi, to announce at Milan the birth of the King of Rome, and receive a reply the same day, the case was unique. It took days, and months, for letters to pass. The springs, too extended, were slackened, and soon to be broken: in the struggle against matter, time, and space, the man, already disarmed, must be vanquished." [2]

With his own hands, Napoleon had wrecked the system of government which he had inaugurated five years before, which he had organized in the face of coalized Europe, and in which he had thus far placed all of his hopes. It is doubtful whether the Family, in any event, could have been useful to his plans, but now he had put it beyond their power to succor him. The "Spanish ulcer" was to remain an open sore: where only the surgeon's knife could have been effective, he applied soothing ointments. In the far North, Bernadotte, the brother-in-law of Joseph, was preparing to betray him; and in the far South, his own brother-in-law, Murat, was ready to turn against him.

The marriage contract with the Archduchess Marie-Louise was no sooner signed, in February 1810, than Napoleon took under consideration the title to be borne by his son, if he were so favored by Fortune. None in the traditions of the French Monarchy was suitable — the provinces had been abolished by the Revolution, and the name of a city would be no better than the titles of victories given to the marshals. Only one city was sufficiently universal to typify the grandeur of the Empire, and that was Rome, the "Eternal City." By a decree, under date of the 17 February, he announced: "The Prince Imperial bears the title and receives the honors of King of Rome."

For over eight centuries, the German Emperor-elect, prior to his coronation by the Pope, or the successor of the Emperor, if chosen during his lifetime, had borne the title of King of the Romans. This, however, was only a courtesy title, and did not imply possession of Rome: it therefore did not meet the

[2] 6 Masson, 368.

exalted views of the Emperor. So he decided to annex Rome to the Grand-Empire: this act would also affirm his title to the Western Empire, which had been given up by the Emperor of Austria on the dissolution of the Holy Roman Empire.

His next preoccupation was to provide suitable quarters for his heir. He accordingly took possession of the apartment, on the ground floor of the Tuileries, previously occupied by the grand marshal of the palace, Duroc, whom he assigned a suite in the Pavillon de Marsan. This apartment, which was parallel to that of the Empress, with most of the windows facing on the Carrousel, was redecorated and refurnished at an expense of nearly half a million francs.

This, however, could be only a temporary arrangement; and the Emperor wished to provide a permanent habitation for his son. He therefore directed his architect, Fontaine, to present to him "a project for embellishing the Bois de Boulogne by adding a country-seat built upon the summit of the heights of Chaillot." In his mind's eye, Napoleon could already see this palace of the King of Rome, crowning the hill where the Trocadéro now stands, reached by a splendid new avenue from the Arc de Triomphe, with the Bois de Boulogne as a park, and Bagatelle as a hunting-lodge.

As his idea was to have an edifice superior in every respect to all similar constructions, past and present, he demanded full particulars regarding the residences of the Roman emperors, as well as all the existing palaces in Europe. The palace, which was to be four hundred mètres in length, was to be the centre of a group of government buildings extending along the river on either side. Once, Napoleon was on the point of ordering the palace constructed, at an estimated cost of twenty millions, but yielded to the criticisms of his Minister of the Interior. At the downfall of the Empire in 1814, nothing had been done beyond clearing the ground, and starting on the foundations. Nothing could more clearly show, than this senseless scheme, the extent to which Napoleon at this time had lost his mental balance: "the passion for the grandiose had overmastered the

calculating faculties which in early life generally held ambition in leash." [3]

The King of Rome was named Napoleon-Francis-Joseph-Charles: for his father; his grandfather and first godfather, the Emperor of Austria; his uncle and second godfather, the King of Spain; and for his paternal grandfather. The private baptism (*ondoiement*) was performed, on the evening of the 20 March, by the grand-almoner, Cardinal Fesch, assisted by M. de Rohan, the almoner of the Empress. The ceremony was attended by all the grand dignitaries of the Empire, and by all the ladies who had been presented at Court. The procession traversed the State apartments on the first floor of the palace, and descended the grand staircase, to the Chapel. Arranged in order upon each step were veterans of the Old Guard, each one wearing the cross upon his breast: a vivid emotion was depicted on their stern faces, and there were tears of joy in their eyes. The Emperor appeared at the side of the governess, Mme. de Montesquiou, who bore the child, with his face uncovered, upon a cushion of white satin covered with lace.[4]

After the baptism, the procession returned to the State apartments, where the little King was invested with the cordons of the Légion d'honneur and of the Couronne de fer. The salvos of one hundred and one guns were repeated; there were fireworks in the Place de la Concorde; and all the public buildings, except the Tuileries, were illuminated.

The public baptism was celebrated, with great pomp, in the chapel of Notre-Dame, on Sunday, the 9 June. All of the details had been arranged by the Emperor himself, with the greatest care. "For him, the baptism was much less a religious ceremony than an enthronement of his dynasty." [5] The baptism at the Cathedral was without precedent under the Ancien Régime: the royal children had all been baptized, at

[3] Rose, *Personality of Napoleon*, 365.
[4] Mme. de La Tour du Pin, 2 *Journal*, 308; 3 Vandal, 119–120.
[5] Masson, *Napoléon et son fils*, 146.

Saint-Germain, the Tuileries, the Louvre, Fontainebleau, or the Palais-Cardinal, wherever the Court happened to be in residence, prior to the completion of Versailles, and later in the chapel there. It had also been the custom to have only one godfather, but Napoleon adopted the etiquette of the Court of Vienna, and had three.

The ceremonies and fêtes of the baptism demonstrated how completely the Emperor had lost his former hold on the affections of the people. All the letters and memoirs of the time attest that, although there was a large crowd to view the procession to Notre-Dame, there were no cheers, and little enthusiasm was shown. Since his marriage with a daughter of the Cæsars, Napoleon had abandoned his former democratic ways, which had endeared him to the nation. Between himself and the people, he had erected a wall of etiquette more impenetrable than that at Versailles in the days of Louis Quatorze. Only the officials were invited to the ceremonies: only those presented at Court — nearly all ci-devant nobles — were welcomed at the fêtes. Napoleon seemed to feel that his power, like that of the ancient kings, was based upon divine right, and not on the will of the nation. He shut himself up in the Tuileries, and rarely appeared in public, except when he passed rapidly in his carriage, with the Empress by his side. The people began to murmur, as they had against the other "Autrichienne," and Marie-Louise was about as unpopular as Marie-Antoinette had been.

In a letter to Joséphine, written at the time of the birth of the King of Rome, Napoleon said that the baby had his eyes and mouth and chest. But the trustworthy portraits, painted during the three years that the child remained in France, all show a strong resemblance to his mother. For his own portraits, the Emperor had adopted an official type: "He had wished to fix in the memory of his people, in a definite fashion, the form in which they should imagine their sovereign. The Emperor, founder of the Fourth Dynasty, must appear to his subjects, majestic, serene, and grave, handsome with a beauty

almost superhuman, like the deified Cæsars. That his portraits resemble his person, he cares not; it is enough that the distinctive traits stand out, from the paintings, the statues, or the monuments, in such a way that no one can fail to recognize him." [6]

Such are the paintings of the typical Napoleon, which we find in the works of David, Gérard, and others, produced subsequent to 1805; and the Emperor expected every artist, who executed a portrait of his child, to make of the baby face a miniature reproduction of the Imperial visage.

Among the portraits of the baby King of Rome, it is difficult therefore to select the one which was really true to life. The miniature by Isabey, which Marie-Louise sent to her father, was probably flattering; but the sketches by Prud'hon, who had a better opportunity to observe the child, are doubtless more authentic.

In the dozen portraits painted at Vienna, between 1821 and 1831, the last ten years of his life, he is the living image of his mother: the resemblance to Marie-Louise is so marked that no discussion is possible. He has the same shape of head, the same high forehead, the same eyes, nose, mouth, and chin. It is useless to claim that these Austrian artists accentuated his Habsburg traits, as the earlier French painters made him a miniature Napoleon. His aunt Caroline Murat, who certainly did not love Marie-Louise, attested that these portraits were true to life. Besides, we have the death-mask, which certainly did not lie.

If we may judge, therefore, by these portraits, it may be asserted that the King of Rome did not resemble his father either in form or features. He was very tall, over six feet, English measure, while Napoleon was of medium height, about five feet six. His hair was blond and wavy, that of Napoleon, dark brown and straight; his head was narrow and pointed, that of his father, large and beautifully formed; his chest was narrow and undeveloped, that of Napoleon, deep and large. Napoleon's eyes were blue-gray; those of his son, a light blue,

[6] Masson, *Op. cit.*, 204–205.

KING OF ROME

and prominent, like those of his mother; his complexion was clear and rosy; that of the Emperor, the color of ivory.

It is even more difficult to state whether, in intellect and character, the son took after his father. He was only three years of age when taken from France, and every effort was made to destroy in him everything that was French. He was educated as a Habsburg prince; he wore Austrian uniforms and decorations; he was called Francis instead of Napoleon; and he was known only as the Duc de Reichstadt.[7]

[7] See *Napoleon and Marie-Louise*, 318–325.

CHAPTER THIRTY-SEVEN

DECEMBER 1810 — JUNE 1812

LUCIEN AND LOUIS

LUCIEN — His Arrival in England — Residence at Dinham House — Misunderstanding with Lord Powis — Purchase of Thorngrove — Life There — Money Affairs — Offer of Louis — Servières Sent to Rome — Failure to Recover the Paintings — Remittances from Madame — Plans to Reside in America

LOUIS — He Dismisses Dr. Latour — Speck and Hufeland — The Pomade — His Solitude — Bylandt Refuses to Come — Correspondence — Louis's State of Mind — Letters to Lucien — Life at Gratz — Letters to His Son — Literary Tastes — Romance of *Marie* — Résumé of the Book — Real Personages — His Love for Émilie de Beauharnais — Disappointment over the Reviews

LUCIEN landed at Plymouth on the 12 December 1810, but it was the end of January before his mother received the news. Then she hastened to notify all the members of the family: "Lucien has been transported with all his family to London, where they have been well received. The English all display much consideration."

Soon after his arrival, Lucien took up his residence at Dinham House, Ludlow, on the borders of Wales. The mansion, a large brick building, was the property of Lord Powis, a son of the great Lord Clive. Lucien unpacked all of the objets d'art brought from Italy, and made himself completely at home. For some unknown reason, he seems to have imagined that this hospitality was offered him gratuitously. This was all the more welcome because, since his departure from Italy, he had expended over 200,000 francs, and he was short of ready money. But, at the end of six months, Powis "dishonored English hospitality" by asking for a cheque, on account of rent. In the opinion of Lucien, such meanness on the part of the wealthy

peer was beyond words. However, he sent a cheque for 300 guineas, which was at the rate of a rental of 15,000 francs a year. Then he began to look for another home. He finally purchased for £9000 (about 225,000 francs) the château of Thorngrove, three miles from Worcester, and fifteen from Ludlow. The mansion was large, and agreeably situated, with an extensive garden, planted with fruit trees. This became the home of Lucien during the remainder of his sojourn in England. The society of Worcester was much excited over the residence in the neighborhood of a man "so illustrious and so persecuted," and the family of Lucien received many visits and invitations. Other callers came from far, including such chiefs of the Whig party as Lord Holland, Lord Brougham, and the Marquis of Lansdowne. But the official world held itself aloof: the lieutenant of the County contented himself with sending an aide, a simple baronet, to present his excuses, and this was a great grief for Lucien.

On his arrival in England, Lucien deposited in a foreign bank, at London, a large part of his funds. By the failure of the bank, in 1811, he lost £8000, and would have lost even more except for the intervention of Mr. Baring, later Lord Ashburton. Without counting his current expenses, in a year the capital of Lucien was impaired to the extent of over 700,000 francs.

Thinking that his brother might be short of funds, as early as February 1811 Louis, of his own accord, made an offer of his assistance. This was all the more remarkable because Louis had never been intimate with Lucien, and had always disliked Alexandrine, from whom he had urged his brother to arrange a separation the previous year. At present, however, he seemed to feel that their similar situations should be a bond of union between them.

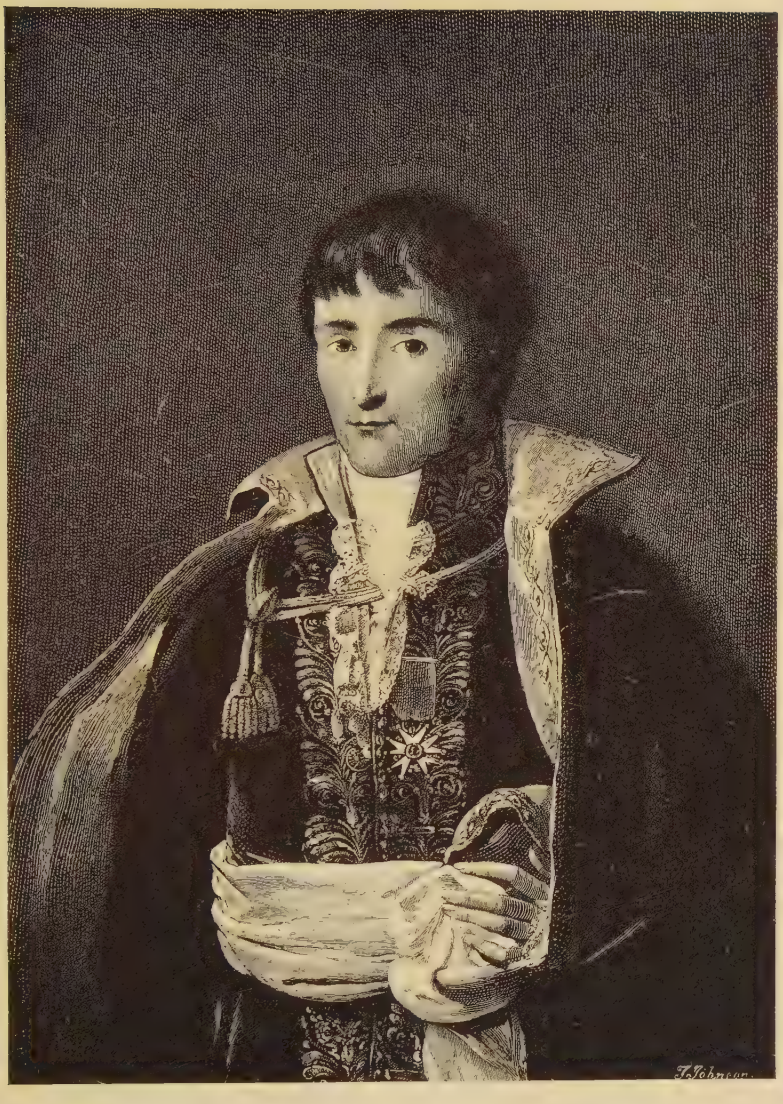
Louis began by offering his excuses to his brother for his letter advising him to separate from his wife. He then offered Lucien the half of all he possessed: the moiety of all his diamonds, and of the interest of a sum of 500,000 florins which he had invested. In conclusion, he suggested the plan

of rejoining Lucien in America, saying that he feared new persecutions.

Lucien made haste to reply that all the old griefs were forgotten; that he awaited his brother in England, to leave from there for America; and that, in the meantime, Louis had better send him what was left of his fortune. To bear his message, and bring back the diamonds, he despatched a man of confidence from Thorngrove to Gratz.

The messenger, as might have been expected, found Louis in a very different frame of mind. "Coming now to the matter of the fortune," he wrote, "I cannot send you the sum that you desire. I must have explained myself very badly in my first letter, or you have surely misunderstood me. I spoke of leaving you all that I had, in case of my death. . . . I have scarcely enough to meet my expenses, buy some books, and give some alms." There was no longer any question of the half of the diamonds, or of the half of the revenues. The messenger returned with empty hands, and Lucien had his "labor for his pains."

Before leaving Italy, Lucien had confided to a friend, the Abbé Colonna, some four hundred paintings, valued at two million francs, and a number of antique statues, worth perhaps three hundred thousand in addition. These were all boxed, ready for shipment to Naples, and thence to America. From Malta, Lucien sent his secretary, Servières, back to Italy, with orders to secure these precious works of art, and ship them to him in England. Servières was forced to take a roundabout route by way of Tunis, and finally landed at Leghorn early in January 1811. There he was closely questioned by the Imperial police, before being allowed to proceed to Rome. By this time, the attention of the Emperor had been drawn to the matter, and he gave orders to Savary "to sequester all of the objets d'art, found at Rome or elsewhere, belonging to Senator Lucien, in order that they may not become the prey of the English." Servières, who was anxious to regain his former position in the Treasury at Paris, made no difficulty about revealing the place where the cases were stored, and the paint-



LUCIEN BONAPARTE

ings were at once unpacked, to prevent their being injured by the dampness. Of all of Lucien's magnificent paintings, there remained at his disposal only those, in a hundred boxes, which he had sent to Caroline at Naples, and a few small ones which he had carried with him. He was therefore forced to renounce his idea of a public sale at London "of the gallery of Lucien Bonaparte," for which he had already had printed a handsome catalogue, containing etchings of the original paintings.[1]

As his letters to his mother at Paris remained without answer, Lucien imagined that they might have been intercepted; so he wrote Stéphanie, the Grand-Duchess of Baden, and begged her to get word to his mother that he was in urgent need of 50,000 francs, to continue his journey to the United States. As soon as she was informed, Madame instructed Nicolas Clary to send Lucien this sum, by drafts on Hamburg; but the money apparently did not reach him.

At that time, there was interned at Worcester a certain General Lefebvre-Desnoëttes,[2] who had been captured by the English in Spain, in December 1808. In October 1810, he had been rejoined by his wife, who was a daughter of M. Rolier, the general intendant of Madame Mère. By placing sums to the credit of this general, at London, Madame finally succeeded in remitting 100,000 francs to Lucien. Great pains were taken to keep the whole matter a secret, but it is doubtful whether the Emperor was ignorant of the transactions. At any rate, he took no steps to prevent the transfers.

In May 1811, there was a change in the English Ministry, and Lucien was hopeful that he might obtain permission to sail for the United States, where he had selected Philadelphia as

[1] *Lucien Bonaparte's Gallery. Choix de Gravures à l'eau forte, d'après les Peintures et les Marbres de la Galerie de Lucien Bonaparte. 142 etchings by Italian artists. With a Catalogue in French.*

"All the engravings were made in Italy and have the same numbers as the pictures and sculptures in the Gallery, but in this volume they have been placed according to the various Schools of Painting to which they belong." (Note at head of the Catalogue.)

[2] See Vol. I, page 265.

his place of residence. To procure funds for his voyage, he sent the nephew of his first wife, André Boyer, to Naples to secure the paintings confided to Caroline, and doubtless also to obtain additional sums which he expected to receive from different members of the family.

Since the last visit from Decazes, the Family had received no reports regarding the health of Louis, except from his physician, Dr. Latour, who had returned to France at the end of March 1811. Louis had lost confidence in Latour, and did not regret his departure. Still searching for the secret of Jouvence, which he had vainly looked for in every quarter of Europe, Louis had confided himself to a charlatan by the name of Speck, who had persuaded him that the waters of Gratz were a sovereign remedy for his malady. At this time, he had lost the use of his lower limbs, and his right hand was so nearly paralyzed that his writing was almost illegible. He had also lost most of his hair, which was doubly disagreeable as it exposed him to colds and neuralgia. To remedy this trouble, he ordered, from Paris, a wig, of which he indicated very exactly the measurements. A little later, he read an advertisement of a vegetable pomade which was claimed to be excellent for baldness, and sent to Paris for a large supply; but his hair had begun to grow again, before the remedy reached Gratz.

Louis's family were much disturbed, on hearing that he had dismissed Latour and placed himself in the hands of Dr. Speck. "You could do nothing more distressing to your august family," wrote Decazes. Louis replied: "Reassure yourself regarding the departure of my physician. It is a piece of good fortune for me, although at the bottom he was a worthy and intelligent man; but he did not know how to deal with me, either with respect to my health or with regard to my position."

But Louis soon tired of Speck, as he had previously of every other medical man he had tried. At the same time, he learned that the celebrated Prussian physician, whom he had called in consultation, from Berlin to Utrecht, had never received, either his letter of thanks, or the honorarium of 6000 florins, which he

had instructed his intendant to forward. He wrote his mother, to beg her to send this sum, saying that he could not remit it from Gratz without a great deal of trouble — adding, " This poor Hufeland has not even been reimbursed for the expenses of his journey." What could be worse for a king, *vis-à-vis* of an illustrious savant!

Having sent away Latour, Louis soon felt that he was abandoned by the whole world, and only Bylandt could fill the void. Using the words of Voltaire, he wrote that he had need of a friend, " *qui me parle du cœur,*" and Bylandt, only Bylandt would satisfy him. When, at the end of June, he learned that Bylandt, restored to his rank, refused to come to Gratz, it was not Bylandt whom he held responsible, but the Emperor! " If left to himself, Bylandt would have come; if he has not come, it is because he was restrained: how shabby and cowardly that is! " In his rage, he held everybody responsible. " It seems to me," he wrote again, " that if my sister and my mother had wished they would certainly have found some way of sending me my aide de camp. I cannot conceive of a *cruelty* so great and so *useless.*" Then, both in prose and in verse, he deplores the *Solitude* to which he is condemned. " Like a regular hermit," he writes, " I am absolutely alone."

When Louis read in the *Moniteur* the details of the Emperor's trip to Holland, in September 1811, and the reports of the addresses made to him by the authorities, he flew into a violent rage. He declared that he would never pardon such baseness on the part of the Hollanders, who had broken their oath to him, in throwing themselves into the arms of the one who had united Holland to his Empire in a manner so illegal, and who had worn his own decoration of the *Union,* with the name changed to *Réunion,* and the new motto: *Tout pour l'Empire.* All of which shows that Louis still suffered from the delusion that he was King of Holland by divine right, instead of by the will of his august brother.

A few weeks prior to this date, on the 26 July, he went to Bruck to see the Emperor Francis, solicited an audience, and

placed in his hands a copy of the document, under date of the first of August 1810, protesting against his dethronement.

In his private letters at this time, particularly those to Lucien, Louis displayed the same ideas, so often repeated in his correspondence, that he was an object of persecution by his brother: Napoleon had not only stolen his crown, but had ruined his entire life. "From my earliest youth," he said, "I have been wounded, maltreated, suppressed by my brother. I sacrificed the flower of my youth to follow him in his campaigns. From the age of fifteen years, I served my country with an absolute devotion, an unequalled activity, and I have never received from my brother a mark of encouragement. He made me interrupt my studies, to devote myself to the profession of arms, and, as soon as I had given myself up to it entirely, while others advanced rapidly, and were praised, publicly lauded, often with justice, but sometimes with exaggeration, I was forgotten. Except for the two Ministers of War, Carnot first and Bernadotte later, I should still have been a captain upon the return from Egypt, and yet, in the war, I lost my robust health, and precious time."

Not content with retarding his advancement, Napoleon had, first of all, forced a wife upon him, and then a crown. "The final events," he continued, "my journey to Paris and my imprisonment, my return and finally my abdication, pass all belief. It is useless for me to speak to you of the injustice, and of all the kinds of misfortune, of which I have been the victim: a volume would scarcely be long enough."

In conclusion, Louis announced his intention of going to live in America, and prayed Lucien to send him as soon as possible an English passport in the name of *L. Van Hol*, by means of which he would gain the United States, and rejoin his brother.

Notwithstanding all his complaints, however, Louis was very comfortably installed at Gratz, in a mansion called Maison Suisse, for which he had paid down 25,000 florins, and was to pay 14,000 additional in September. That he had in mind an even more luxurious establishment is indicated by his request that his mother should purchase, for 420,000 francs, his dia-

monds, which he claimed were worth much more. Madame declined the proposition, but he found another purchaser, and invested in an estate with a very fine château. When his mother and sisters learned of the sale of his jewels, they naturally supposed that Louis was in distress, and offered to assist him. He refused all of their offers, and wrote that he was in need of no aid; he had sold his diamonds because "they embarrassed him, and he detested them more than ever." With Jérôme, he was less polite. The letter, offering his assistance, was addressed to *King Louis*. Louis returned the letter unopened, after writing on the envelope: "*There is no King Louis here, but one Louis Bonaparte, Comte de Saint-Leu.*"

As a matter of fact, Louis was in no need of funds. His investments yielded him an income of nearly 100,000 francs, and his wants were few. If he asked his mother to pay some bills, like the account of Hufeland, it was only as a matter of convenience, and not because he was short of ready money.

The most profound sentiment of Louis's heart — stronger even than his selfishness and his hatred of his brother — was his paternal love for his elder son, Napoleon, for he rarely spoke of the younger brother, Louis. "For his brother, of whose temperament I am ignorant," he wrote, "I place my confidence entirely in his mother." In spite of his differences with the governess, Mme. de Boubers, at the period of his abdication, he had complete confidence in her, and wished her to have the entire direction of the little crown-prince. He was therefore much disturbed when, in March 1811, Mme. de Boubers was named by the Emperor as sous-gouvernante of the King of Rome.

Louis kept up an active correspondence with the little Napoleon, who was now nearly seven years of age. "I have received your last letter," he wrote, "and I am much pleased with your penmanship. I do not write you more frequently because I am occupied with the care of my health, and you know that I suffer principally with my right hand. Besides, I am sure that most of my letters do not reach you. I do not

know, my dear child, when I shall see you; but even if I do not see you, that does not prevent me from tenderly loving you: it is even a reason to love you the more. I hope that you feel like myself; that you do not forget the pleasure which your letters give me, and the proofs which I find in them of your progress and your good behavior. Write me all that you wish to say, as if you were near me, and speak to me of your studies. My health is good; I am feeling much better at present. Adieu, my dear child, I embrace you tenderly."

It is impossible to say whether Louis was entirely sincere when he wrote Lucien: "If the Emperor had recognized my son, I should have returned to France as soon as they were willing to let me live as a private citizen, either in Provence or Corsica, no matter at what personal risk." However this may be, it is only fair to state, that Louis had declared, at Paris, his willingness to make any sacrifices for this son; that he had abdicated in his favor; and that, in all the subsequent negotiations, he had posed as the primary condition that his son should be returned to his care. If he no longer spoke of this matter, it was because he realized the uselessness of a request which was opposed to the Constitution of the Empire, the will of the Emperor, and, above all, to the obstinate determination of Hortense.

Next to his son, the greatest passion of Louis was literature. He would rather have been a great poet, or a celebrated novelist, than a great king. In every one of his letters to Paris we find demands for books. "Try to send me often, and regularly, a work from my library, and of the best you can choose," he wrote. "I would like to have you make, and send me, a catalogue of a well-chosen library, of books which are interesting, and at the same time entirely new." He asks for a new work by Chateaubriand; a translation of Tacitus, also one of *Werther;* complete editions of Rousseau and Bossuet; a new book by Mme. de Souza, which had created quite a sensation, and so on.

Not content with reading, he also wished to write. "I have found a unique subject for a great poem," he said, in one of his

letters. He made verses, many verses, and translated odes from Horace. But his chef-d'œuvre was a romance, begun at Töplitz, which he entitled: *Marie, ou les peines de l'Amour.* The book was finally published, at Gratz, in the summer of 1812, in two volumes, of about 350 pages each. The first edition was 500 copies, of which 400 were put on sale. Louis received from the publisher a thousand florins, which he gave to the poor.

The last of June, he sent a copy to Decazes, accompanied by a very modest letter, in which he prayed his friend to give him the benefit of his candid criticism, principally with regard to his language. "Do me the pleasure of pointing out the errors, in order that I may not fall into them again," he wrote. "This will be easy for you," he added, "because you are near the Academy. I await your reply with impatience."

M. Masson gives a six-page résumé of the principal episodes of this romance, which few persons have seen or read.[3] The style of the book is bad; it is full of errors of every kind; "nevertheless *Marie, ou les peines de l'Amour* is one of the books which best reveal the character of the author."

Most of the characters were drawn from persons who were intimate friends of Louis. There is little doubt that Louis depicted himself under the traits of *Jules,* the lover of *Marie:* he lends to this character his ideas, his opinions, his tastes, his dreams. This *Jules* accomplishes all the acts of prowess, which Louis, if his physique had not prevented, would have wished to perform: he triumphs over the enemies of his country, over his rivals in love, over fire and water. *Jules's* observations upon the world of Paris under the Directory, his thoughts on suicide, his maledictions against impure women, his opinions on the subject of divorce, Louis expressed over and over again in his letters. Many of the pages might have been taken from his *Mémoires.*

Jules has a dog which is devoted to him. Louis loved dogs: he was the only one of the family who constantly had a dog around him. The society of a dog to him appeared preferable

[3] See 7 Masson, 140–145.

to that of most human beings, its affection more sincere and more disinterested.

To continue the comparison: the character of *Marie,* the the heroine of the romance, was drawn from Émilie de Beauharnais (Mme. Lavalette). In a long letter to Lucien, written at the time that he was composing his novel, Louis recalls in great detail his love affair with Émilie: how his marriage with her was prevented by his brother, and she was forced to espouse a man whom she did not love. He then speaks of his own marriage to Hortense; how he resisted the idea for several years, but was finally constrained to wed a woman whom he did not love, and who did not love him, with all the lamentable consequences which followed. These declarations are contemporaneous with the writing of *Marie;* also with letters, very respectful doubtless, but very tender, written to Mme. Lavalette.

Other characters who appear in the book, depicted in colors far from flattering, are Hortense, Mme. Tallien, and Mme. Récamier. Regarding the latter, he recounts several scandalous anecdotes which were well known to all Parisian society, including one recorded at considerable length by Thiébault in his *Mémoires.*

It is impossible to explain the motive of Louis in placing these anecdotes in his book, except upon the supposition that he wished to throw discredit upon women who were compatriots of Hortense.

The revision and copying of the manuscript, the correction of the proofs, the placing of the work on sale, all gave Louis many happy hours; but he was much disappointed because no French critical *Revue* dared to mention *Marie, ou les peines de l'Amour.*

CHAPTER THIRTY-EIGHT

JUNE 1811 — APRIL 1812

JOSEPH AND JEROME

JOSEPH — His Return to Spain — Napoleon Fails to Keep His Promises — Joseph's Demands for Money — Napoleon Cannot Equal the English Expenditures — Complaints of Joseph — His Condition Pitiful — Rumors of the Annexation of Catalonia — Joseph's Ultimatum — The Emperor Yields — He Again Breaks His Word — Napoleon's Dilemma — He Recalls His Equipages and His Guard — Annexes Catalonia — Tyranny of the French in Spain — Misery of Joseph — The Command Promised Him — Jourdan, Chief-of-Staff — Joseph's Threat to Return Never Received — The Emperor's Ambiguous Letter — Failure of the New Overtures to England — Joseph's Responsibility

JEROME — His Troubles with the Emperor — No Attention Paid to His Reports of German Unrest — His Hopes of Military Glory — His Palace Burned — Disgrace of Meyronnet — Assassination of Morio — Preparations for the Russian War

WHEN Joseph left Paris on the 16 June 1811, a week after the baptism, he had not succeeded in gaining the two points which were the main objects of his visit: (1) the "direct and absolute" command of the armies of the North, of Aragon, and of the South; (2) the right to resume the administration of the provinces which he considered pacified. Nevertheless, the concessions which he had wrung from Napoleon were immense, *provided* the Emperor kept his promises, and the generals were willing to conform to the orders given them.

Many other requests which Joseph had made were at first refused, such as: that Bessières should be superseded by Jourdan in the command of the Army of the North; that there should be an equitable division of the revenues of the occupied provinces between the army of occupation and the Spanish administration; that the Emperor should continue to pay the Army of the Centre; and so on.

On the eve of Joseph's departure, however, the Emperor granted certain demands: he promised 500,000 francs a month up to the first of July, and a million after that date; and he made Joseph an advance payment of a million on account; he also agreed to send Jourdan to the Army of the North, and to let Joseph keep Belliard as chief-of-staff.

But Joseph was unwilling to return to Spain without having the Emperor's promises confirmed in writing: he therefore stopped at Marrac [1] to await the letter. The first communication which he received from Berthier, under date of the 17 June, was not in accord with Napoleon's promises: it stated that " the Emperor would be glad to have Jourdan employed as governor of Madrid." Furthermore, the Emperor counted on the King to support the Duc de Raguse (Marmont) with 2000 or 3000 infantry, 1800 cavalry, and 15 to 18 pieces of artillery. This meant the depletion of the Army of the Centre, which alone the King commanded, and which was the principal defence of his capital. The Emperor also demanded that, after his arrival at Madrid, the King should go to pass in review the Army of Portugal. As Joseph did not command this army, this order seemed to him most unreasonable.

Even more disquieting were the letters sent to the generals in command, copies of which were forwarded to the King for his information: the generals were made the sole judges of their needs, and were to decide what proportion of the revenues to retain for the support of their forces, and what proportion to turn over to the King, for the service of the Government, and the payment of the Army of the Centre. Under this arrangement, Joseph well knew that not a *maravédis* would enter the Treasury of Madrid.

Joseph pointed out the discrepancies between the promises and their fulfilment. " In the capital of the King of Spain," he said, " since the garrison as well as the National Guard is Spanish, the post of commander of the troops should be held by a Spaniard, or by a Frenchman in the service of Spain." He

[1] A château near Bayonne, purchased by Napoleon during his sojourn there in April 1808. It was burned in 1825. (See Schuermans, 226.)

had secured, at Paris, the promise of the Emperor that Belliard should not be reappointed to this command; and he objected, for the same reasons, to the naming of Jourdan, notwithstanding his confidence in the marshal. To accept a marshal of the Empire as governor of his capital would be to recognize the Emperor as his suzerain.

Joseph put in a claim for at least a quarter of the revenues from the occupied provinces, but without much hope of success. In his letters, both to the Emperor, and to Mollien, the Minister of the Treasury, he endeavored to impress upon them the importance of the regular payment, at least, of the promised subsidy. To Mollien, he said: "You will save French blood by augmenting my means of attack and defence." To the Emperor, on the eve of passing the Bidassoa (26 June): "I pray Your Majesty to permit me to recall to you how important it is that the money to be disbursed by France in Spain should be sent as soon as possible."

At that time, the English were spending enormous sums in Spain. Their army, except for a few special regiments, was British only in name: it was composed of a body of mercenary troops of different nationalities, Spanish, Italians, Germans, even some French, purchased by English guineas. The war in the Peninsula was costing every year twenty-five millions in pounds sterling (625 millions of francs). This was at least six times as large as the sum expended by France, counting both the 40 millions furnished by the Imperial Treasury and the contributions wrung from the country.

The two opposing armies — the French and the British — were practically equal in size: each about 150,000 men; but the expenses of England were far greater. In this matching of resources, Napoleon, with all the demands of his enormous Empire, could not compete with England. It was impossible for him to accede to the demand of Joseph, to double the million a month which he had promised. The preparations for the war with Russia were exhausting his resources. Even if he expected, as in previous campaigns, to exact a large indemnity from the vanquished foe, for the moment he could rely only on

the contributions furnished by his vassals and allies, and on advances which were draining his own Treasury.

But the cry of Joseph was for money, always for money! From Valladolid, he wrote the Emperor: "If I had at my disposition to-day twenty millions, and all authority within reason over the armies of the North and of Aragon, I think that I could change the aspect of the country. . . . The outlook was never more favorable. This is the opinion of all Spaniards of good faith; also of all the French who have common-sense, and who wish to end this war."

On his arrival at Madrid, his first letter (17 July) was a plea to the Emperor to forward promptly the funds promised him. By all the couriers, sent every day or two, he reiterated the same demands and expressed the same hopes. "All the bands demand to enter my service," he wrote; "but I have not a sou: I can pay no one." Again he says: "My Guard has not been paid in eighteen months; I am shorter of money than at the time I left Madrid. My total resources are less than ten thousand francs a day. . . . I beg Your Majesty to come to my rescue with several millions, but at least by the regular payment of the million a month. Public opinion is very favorable. There is a great change. Some assistance, and it will be complete." But the money did not come!

Finally, he received news from Berthier (2 August) that the Emperor had sent eight millions to Spain; but only one was for the King — 500,000 francs for June, and the same amount for July. This was not in accordance with Napoleon's promise, of a million a month after the first of July, and Joseph wrote Berthier to have this error corrected. But the whole month of August passed, and no remittance had yet reached Madrid. By every courier, Joseph pleaded and protested: "If I had received the succors promised me at Paris, I should have ten thousand Spaniards instead of five thousand." On the 22d, he wrote Berthier: "If this state of affairs continues, before the end of six months we shall evacuate Spain for lack of rations. The enemy does not spare his money. As for myself, to tell

you all in a word, I do not know how I shall pay my table expenses after ten days; and, for my employés, the situation is even worse." At last, the million arrived, two to three months late.

In reality, the state of Joseph was pitiful. He posed as a king: he had his Maison, his Court, his ministers, his envoys, a Guard, an army, his employés in every branch of the service — and, of all these, none was paid.

To make matters worse, the Emperor was continually depleting the Army of the Centre of officers and men. Bessières, Belliard, and many others, were ordered to return to France. On the 24 August, when his army was reduced to 2000 cavalry, and 9000 infantry, of whom 5000 were Spaniards, the King received a formal order from the Emperor to send Marmont one of his regiments of chasseurs. "The armies of the South and of Portugal," wrote Berthier, "are the real defence of the capital."

In the midst of this crisis, there came the news of the Emperor's decrees, already mentioned, on the subject of the Frenchmen in the service of foreign princes; and nearly all the French retainers of Joseph wished to leave for home. There were also rumors of annexations, which soon turned out to be well-founded.

Joseph had declared repeatedly that he would abandon his throne in case the Emperor violated the integrity of the Spanish territory. Napoleon perhaps hoped that the wide-spread rumors of the annexation of Catalonia, — taken in connection with the misery of Joseph, the depletion of the Army of the Centre, and the defection of his officers, — would finally cause the King to abdicate, and lead to the termination of the war. But, if Joseph once more gave up the idea of sending for his wife and children; if he declared that he would be forced to abandon Madrid, and seek refuge with the army of Suchet or that of Soult, he had no more intention of retiring than on previous occasions when he had made the same threat. He was sure that Napoleon would yield in the end, as usual, and come

to his rescue. He multiplied his complaints to Berthier; and finally, as on a previous occasion, he instructed Julie to convey his ultimatum to the Emperor at Compiègne, where she was invited. After reciting all of his grievances: the proposed annexation of Catalonia, the recall of his officers, the impossibility of sustaining himself, without men or money, he said: "In this state of affairs it is necessary to obtain from the Emperor a *positive declaration.* If I ought to remain, the promises made me must be kept: in that case, come, and bring with you the funds agreed upon, in order that I may be free from inquietude for our existence during a period of six months. But if the Emperor, at least, does not do that; if he desires me to return to France: ascertain this; let me know; and may this long drama come to an end — the sooner the better! "

As had happened before, when Julie intervened, the Emperor at once gave way. For this woman, who never had liked him, who never had forgiven him for jilting her sister Désirée, he had a kind of respect, due partly to her virtues, and partly to the glamour of riches which had enveloped the Clary family at the time of Joseph's marriage. This was the first step of the Bonapartes on the road to Fortune, and the impression had remained, even in the mind of the sovereign of the Grand-Empire.

In the presence of Julie, Napoleon was ashamed to admit the end which he had in view: he could not tell her that he wished to dethrone his elder brother. He sincerely desired to see Joseph retire, but he would not force him to do so. As usual, the Spirit of the Clan overruled the true interests of the Empire, and Julie carried her point. On the 9 October, the Emperor instructed Berthier: "Write His Catholic Majesty that I am giving orders that the money he desires be sent him." At the same time, Joseph was authorized to retain, for the Army of the Centre, the troops coming from France, destined for the Army of the South; and Soult received a peremptory order to return to the King the detachments belonging to his army. Joseph was reassured, and he wrote on the 9 November: "I see with pleasure that the Emperor comprehends the difficulty of my position, and is coming to my succor. The enemy is

waging a terrible war against us with money, and the state in which I find myself aids him much, through the desertions caused by our need of everything."

But Napoleon did not keep his promise any better than before: a full month elapsed before the money arrived, and then it was only 500,000 francs, instead of the million expected. On the 24 December, Joseph wrote: "I pray Your Majesty to let me retire to France, or to have me paid regularly the million a month promised me, to date from the first of July. With this succor, I can drag along; without it, I cannot prolong my sojourn here, and I shall be embarrassed even to make my journey: I have exhausted all my resources."

Christmas came, and passed, without the arrival of any more funds; and, on the first day of the New Year, Joseph addressed a formal communication to the French ambassador, in which he drew a parallel between the promises made him and their fulfilment. He said that, no doubt, reasons independent of the will of the Emperor had thus far prevented the remittances, but "in default of the payment of a million a month, I cannot prolong my stay here in a manner compatible with the honor of my name."

For many months, Napoleon had been heartily disgusted with the whole Spanish enterprise. He was weary of pouring out his money like water, without seeing any return for it. He was tired of having Julie occupy one of his palaces, the Petit-Luxembourg, and of paying her the million francs a year, which was Joseph's dotation as a French prince. For once in his life, he was literally at his wits' end, to know what to do with Spain. It was a veritable "Slough of Despond"; and he had no clear idea of the means to employ, or the ends to pursue, in order to extricate himself. He had long realized that he alone could put an end to a situation which was daily growing more desperate, by going in person to the Peninsula, and placing himself at the head of affairs. Since 1809, he had maintained, first at the frontier, and later at Valladolid, his campaign equipages. On several occasions, he had announced his departure, more or less

formally, and as often had changed his mind. Now, at the end of December 1811, he sent orders for his horses and carriages to be brought back to France, and they left Valladolid, under a heavy escort, on the 11 January. He recalled all of the élite troops which he had in Spain, including the cavalry and infantry of his Guard, and the members of his personal staff.

Anticipating the remonstrances of Joseph, he wrote him on the first day of January: "In no case shall I withdraw any troops from Spain, and I shall send some new ones." So far as numbers meant anything, his words were exact; but the twenty-two battalions of the Guard, and the eighteen of élite troops, were replaced by three divisions, forty-two battalions, of ordinary troops. "Thus, the armies of Spain, instead of losing, found themselves augmented."

While his forces in Spain were being "thus augmented" by a lot of conscripts, the Kingdom was being diminished by the loss of a province. On the 14 January, the Emperor sent Berthier orders to make Catalonia a territorial division, organized in four departments. The decree, transmitted to the major-general read: "The territory of Catalonia is reunited to the French Empire."

On reflection, however, the Emperor modified his plan upon one essential point: he suppressed the reunion to the Empire, and stopped with the division into four departments. No attention was paid to the rights of Joseph: his Army of the Centre, reduced nearly to his Guard and his Spanish regiments, was thus surrounded, entirely shut in, by the French forces, over which he had no authority, and with which he had no relations, even of courtesy.

The result of the Emperor's policy was the division of Spain into a number of military fiefs, entirely independent of each other, and united to the Empire by the slenderest of ties. It was a return to the conditions in France during the Middle Ages, when Artois and Auvergne were ruled by their comtes, Normandie and Bourgogne, by their ducs. Suchet governed Valencia, Soult dominated Andalusia, Marmont was supreme in Estrama-

dura, other commanders in other provinces, and all reigned with absolute power — levying contributions, recruiting soldiers, giving no assistance to their neighbors unless they saw fit to do so.

"As for the King of Spain," writes M. Masson, "in their disdain for everything that was not military; in their scornful hatred of the Emperor's family; in the pride of their independence, they took a childish pleasure in hazing him, in insulting him, in seeing him struggle in his misery. . . . In their dealings with the Spaniards, there were no restraints on their tyranny — neither a common religion, nor hereditary traditions, nor care for the future, because their only aim was to derive as much profit as possible from their momentary sovereignty. . . . They were the masters: their word made the law, and no law could prevail against them — no institution, no tradition. Such a despotism had never been known; for the first Capétiens, if their effective power hardly extended beyond the royal domain, at least were invested, in face of their great vassals, with a moral authority, a family right, a sovereign prestige, a religious consecration. Here, Joseph has nothing which elevates him, which recommends him, which inspires respect." [2]

Even the money sent by the Emperor was stolen by these satraps. On the 25 January, Joseph was advised from Burgos that the eleventh remittance of 1811 had been received there, but no troops could be spared to escort the convoy to Madrid. The King was forced to send his own soldiers to guard the money; and his envoy received only 380,000 francs, the balance, 120,000, being retained as his "commission" by the commander of the Army of the North! When none of this small sum was distributed among the Royal Guard, which had not been paid for nine months, the officers demanded to be sent back to France, and the soldiers deserted to join the English army, where they were highly and regularly paid.

On the 3 March, the French ambassador to Madrid officially announced to the Minister of Foreign Affairs the annexation of

[2] 7 Masson, 270.

Catalonia. At that moment, the situation at Madrid was truly desperate: bread was eighteen sous a pound, and people were dying of famine in the streets; the guerrillas were so bold that they penetrated even to the heart of the capital, killing and robbing the inhabitants; all communications were cut off, and Joseph had no news from Paris, or from the armies. Yet, in spite of everything, the King clung obstinately to his trembling throne, and refused to depart. On the 11 January, he wrote Julie: "I do not wish to increase the existing embarrassment; and I am ready to remain as long as the war in the North can make him desire it." It was an evidence of devotion and self-sacrifice which he gave the Emperor; but, by way of recompense, he expected his brother to give him the supreme command, with full powers.

This time, Joseph was not disappointed in his hopes. On the 13 March, he received the following letter from Berthier, written on the 18 February: "The Emperor wishes Marshal Jourdan to be your chief-of-staff; for, if the political situation obliges His Majesty to go to Poland, it is his intention to give you the command of all his armies in Spain." This was the bulletin of Joseph's victory!

The 17 July 1811, the Emperor had instructed Berthier to send Jourdan to Madrid; and the marshal, on his arrival (30 September), had assumed the duties of governor, to which Joseph, a month later, had joined those of chief-of-staff of the Army of the Centre. In these two capacities, Jourdan received a salary of 100,000 francs — 40,000 as marshal, and 60,000 as governor of Madrid. On receiving his new appointment, he demanded a hundred thousand extra, to equalize his pay with that of the other marshals when on active service.[3] The Emperor accorded the money, but he once more turned a deaf ear to the request of Joseph that Jourdan should be given the long-coveted title of Duc de Fleurus.

Feeling now that he was indispensable, in view of the Emperor's departure for the North, on the 23 March Joseph sent

[3] The marshals received: 40,000 francs in salary, 40,000 as commanders-in-chief, and 120,000 by way of supplement.

his private secretary to Julie, as bearer of a letter to Napoleon, in which he renounced the throne of Spain if: (1) the decree of reunion (of Catalonia) had taken effect; (2) the Emperor, going to Russia, did not give him the chief command, and the administration of the country; (3) money had not been sent him, following the 500,000 francs which he had received for January.

This ultimatum, unfortunately, never was received by the Emperor. The secretary of Joseph was killed by the guerrillas; the letter was published by the Spanish journals, and copied by the English gazettes: in this way, the news reached Napoleon, who considered the reports false, and paid no attention to them. He thus lost his last opportunity of accepting Joseph's abdication, sending Ferdinand back to his throne, and withdrawing from the whole disastrous Spanish enterprise.

On the 16 March, the Emperor sent the following letter to the Prince de Neuchâtel:

"My cousin, you will advise the King of Spain by a special messenger, who will set out this evening, that I confide to him the command of all my armies in Spain, and that Marshal Jourdan will perform the duties of chief-of-staff. At the same time, you will give this order to Marshal Jourdan. You will inform the King that I will make known to him my intention regarding political matters through the medium of my ambassador. You will write Marshal Suchet, the Duc de Dalmatie [Soult], and the Duc de Raguse [Marmont], that I have confided to the King of Spain the command of my armies in this kingdom; that Marshal Jourdan will perform the duties of chief-of-staff; and that they must conform to all the orders that they receive from the King, to cause the armies to march in the same direction."

This letter was confused, obscure, uncertain: the most essential points were left untouched. Joseph was given no power to enforce his orders: the insubordination of the commanders would be as great as before; and disaster was certain to result from such a command.

Without consulting Joseph, the Emperor made one more effort to reëstablish peace on the Continent, and avert the war with Russia. On the 17 April, by his orders, the Duc de Bassano addressed to the English Government the following proposition:

Guarantee of the integrity of Spain by the two contracting parties; France renouncing any augmentation of territory on the other side of the Pyrenees; guarantee of the independence of the actual dynasty, with a national constitution of the Cortes; similar guarantee of the integrity and independence of Portugal, and of the House of Braganza; Naples to Murat; Sicily to King Ferdinand; evacuations of Portugal, Spain, and Sicily, respectively, by the French and English armies of land and sea.

As usual, the presence of Joseph in Spain proved an unsurmountable obstacle; and England refused to treat except on the basis of the recognition of Ferdinand the Seventh as the legitimate King of Spain.

The Spanish situation is summed up by M. Masson in these words:

"One cannot go so far as to affirm that, in remaining in Spain, in spite of the efforts of the Emperor to lead him to a voluntary renunciation; in obstinately insisting on being King, despite his brother, France, and Spain; in thus rendering impossible the negotiation with England, Joseph must be declared responsible for the war with Russia, the disasters which followed it, and, consequently, the downfall of the Empire. . . . But Joseph, even if he was not the cause, was, in any case, the occasion of the disaster." [4]

Jérôme left Paris three weeks after the baptism of the King of Rome, and reached Cassel on the 3 July, having been joined en route, at Ems, by his wife, who had been taking the baths during his absence. He returned even more dissatisfied than Joseph with the results of his journey: not only had he won no

[4] 7 Masson, 283.

concessions from the Emperor, he had lost in consideration and authority. Marshal Davout, who was the commander of the military Department which included Westphalia, was the master, who directed not only his troops but even the internal affairs of his kingdom. Every employé of the Emperor, no matter how insignificant his functions, seemed to think that he was superior even to the highest officials of Jérôme, and gave his orders in the tone of a master. When the King complained, even when the facts amply justified him, the Emperor flew into a rage, and decided in every instance against his brother.

Jérôme, when pressed for the payment of the sums he owed to the Treasury at Paris, was not allowed to retire the capital which he had invested in certain departments, like Weser for example, which had been reunited to the Empire. "These capital sums," he wrote, "are as much my property as those to my credit in the Bank of France." To this complaint, the Emperor made no reply.

At the same time, Jérôme warned the Emperor of the dangers of his system of tyranny in Germany, but no attention was paid to his words. "I cannot doubt," he wrote, "that the enemies of Your Majesty and of France are continuing to weave plots and form in Germany all the threads of a vast conspiracy ready to burst out at the first signal of war. I have had the honor to speak verbally to Your Majesty regarding the principal data which I have obtained on these points; and all the information which comes daily from the different German States tends to confirm the first reports." His letter was accompanied by police reports, intercepted letters, and other evidence, but Napoleon still paid no attention to his warnings.

In fact, Jérôme had not ceased since 1809 to call the attention of the Emperor to what was taking place in Germany. "They propose," he wrote, "to follow the example of Spain; and, if war breaks out, all the States between the Rhine and the Oder will be the scene of a vast and active insurrection." The Emperor replied: "When you have some facts to give me, I shall receive the communication with pleasure. When, on the other hand, you wish to give me some views, I beg you to spare

me." Having said this, the Emperor undertook an official investigation; but, unfortunately, he confined it to Westphalia, and limited it to a conference between his minister at Cassel and the ministers of the King. His own minister, Reinhard, was a German by birth, by marriage, and by sympathy, who was attached to France only through his official position. Consequently, when it came to enlightening the Emperor upon the state of public feeling in Germany, he was blind and mute. Even if well-informed, however, it is doubtful if Napoleon would have changed his policy, as he counted upon his certain victory over Russia to end all discontent.

In the coming war with Russia, Jérôme saw his only opportunity of issuing from his state of nullity, by gaining some military glory. In every letter to the Emperor, he repeated his desire to serve by his side. "The command," he said, "of an army corps, composed of a sufficient number of French troops, and of sixteen to eighteen thousand Westphalians, whom I can put on foot, independent of my brigade at Dantzic, will place me in a position to prove to Your Majesty my zeal for your service and my absolute devotion."

To these insinuations, the Emperor made no direct reply; but he continued to urge his brother to augment his army, and let him believe that a prominent rôle was reserved for him in the coming campaign.

The character of Jérôme, however, was too frivolous for ambition to play a great part in his life; and most of his time was devoted to amusement. Between balls and dinners, reviews and excursions, new mistresses and new ministers, he had but little leisure for serious thoughts.

On the 23 November, the royal palace at Cassel was almost entirely destroyed by a conflagration caused by over-heated chimneys. Jérôme, who was nearly suffocated by the smoke, almost lost his life. As soon as he was revived, he rushed to his wife's apartment, awakened Catherine, wrapped her in a redingote, and carried her to a place of safety.

In the state of his finances, Jérôme could not afford either to

repair or to rebuild the château. The King of Würtemberg, and his own family, came to his assistance by lavish offers of furniture and decorations; but that did not provide a palace, or money to build one. The Emperor limited his succors to expressing his congratulations that "neither you nor the Queen suffered any accident." The city of Cassel offered a donation of 800,000 francs; but Jérôme, upon reflection, thought it better to decline the gift of his subjects or to employ the money in constructing barracks for his soldiers. Finally, it was decided to carry out a very novel idea. In the Rue de Bellevue, near the château, they took possession of an entire new quarter of the city. The houses were connected, by piercing the walls, and installing communicating doors; gates were erected at each end of the street, which thus became the improvised court of the palace; in two weeks, the work was practically finished, and the King could take possession of his new residence.

At this time, Meyronnet was suddenly deprived of all his offices, and forced to retire to Paris, where he died in obscurity in September 1812. Born at Martinique in 1772, he entered the Navy during the Revolution; became a petty-officer; was encountered by Jérôme in the Antilles, and, from that date, became attached to his fortunes. He was created a comte in Westphalia; became grand marshal of the palace, general of brigade, member of the Légion d'honneur. Although he apparently had nothing to do with the conflagration, that disaster was the occasion, if not the cause, of his disgrace.

Before appointing a new grand marshal, Jérôme thought it best to consult the Emperor, who strongly recommended General Morio. Napoleon may have desired to make amends for his severe attack on this officer at Compiègne; at any rate, he said that Morio was worthy of confidence, and would be an addition to the Maison. But Jérôme preferred to retain Morio in the position of grand écuyer, which he had filled for over a year.

Two days after Jérôme had written the Emperor to this effect, on the 24 December Morio was assassinated by a discharged employé of the Royal Stables. He had entered the service of

Jérôme at the time of the founding of the kingdom, and had risen, by his merits, to the positions of major-general, grand écuyer, and colonel-general of the Chasseurs. He had married a sister of Jérôme's confidential man, Lecamus; had recently been made a comte, and was designated in advance to command a Westphalian corps d'armée in the coming war. He was a man of good common-sense, very efficient in the military service, and his death was a great loss to Jérôme.

In December, the Emperor wrote Jérôme a number of letters, to ask information about the condition and numbers of his forces, and the dispositions that he expected to make for the government of his kingdom during his absence, if called away to the war. Jérôme replied that he would create a regency of four members; would leave 14,000 infantry and 1800 cavalry in the kingdom, and would join the Grand Army with 20,000 men. Such a contingent was not to be despised; and it became more and more evident that the Emperor proposed to give his youngest brother a prominent rôle in the coming campaign. The first of February, Jérôme received the circular letter of the Emperor addressed to the princes of the Confederation: "I wish the contingent of Your Majesty to be brought together, and ready to begin the campaign on the 15 February next."

CHAPTER THIRTY-NINE

JUNE 1811 — JUNE 1812

THE PRINCESSES VISIT THE SPAS

MADAME — Her Sojourn at Aix-la-Chapelle — Visit to Jérôme at Cassel — Her Cordial Reception — PAULINE — Her Affair with Montrond — His Arrest and Exile — Reappearance of Canouville — The Emperor Orders Him to Dantzic — His Sad Fate — ELISA — Her Absence at the Baptism — Disagreements with the Emperor — Her Increasing Ugliness — CAROLINE — Her Reconciliation with Her Husband — The Emperor's Eyes Opened — His Severe Measures — Murat's Abject Submission — Scandal of the Spanish Crown Jewels — Caroline's Trip to Paris — She Repairs the Rift — Murat Restored to Favor — HORTENSE — Her Temporary Retirement — Sojourns at Aix-en-Savoie and Geneva — Return to Paris — Birth of the Duc de Morny — She Reappears in Society — The Emperor's Favors — Visit to Aix-la-Chapelle with Her Sons

IMMEDIATELY after the baptism, Madame received the Emperor's permission to leave for Aix-la-Chapelle, on the plea that her age and her health would not allow her to take part in the remaining fêtes. She was accompanied by an imposing suite, and was soon followed by Pauline, who was escorted as far as Brussels by Jérôme.

At Aix, although they passed much of their time together, the mother and daughter had separate establishments, as Pauline was too extravagant for Madame to wish to live with her. While Pauline was occupied with her baths and her love affairs, Madame was concerned principally with the endeavor to secure some news of her favorite son, Lucien, and in exchanging letters with Louis. The season, that year, was very cold and rainy, so Madame was glad to leave, on the 25 August, to pay a visit to Jérôme at Cassel. She had a very warm place in her heart for this "prodigal son," who was so handsome, and so thoughtful always for her pleasure and her comfort.

On this occasion, Jérôme neglected none of those little delicate attentions so dear to the heart of a woman, and especially of a mother. He had sent to Paris for pieces of furniture and hangings similar to those in her own hôtel, so that she would find herself completely at home.

At Coblentz, where she passed the first night of her journey, Madame was met by an aide de camp of the King; and she was received at the frontier by the Minister of the Interior, who escorted her to Marburg. At six leagues from Cassel, Jérôme himself appeared; and on her arrival at the château, she was received by the Queen and the whole Court, in gala costumes. Madame, who was little accustomed to being welcomed with so much ceremony, displayed a generosity most unusual in her case, and made Catherine several very handsome presents: "On ne reconnait plus Madame!"

Her life at Cassel was very different from the quiet existence to which she was accustomed, but she seemed to enjoy it greatly. There were excursions in the vicinity of the capital; reviews of the Westphalian army in her honor; dinners, balls, and special performances at the theatres.

Finally, after postponing her departure several times, at the urgent request of Jérôme, Madame set out for France on the 5 October. She was escorted for a distance of six leagues by the King and Queen, who both displayed much emotion in taking their leave of her. "At her age, and during the century in which we live," wrote Catherine, "it is very difficult to foresee the moment when we may meet again. This separation was doubly painful; for, to me, Madame Mère was a very agreeable companion. She has much intelligence, and great versatility. Being almost always alone, I found in her a great resource. Besides, the heart of a woman has often need to open itself up to the heart of another woman." Catherine very rarely complained, but she must have found relief in talking over her sorrows with a sympathetic listener.

Pauline did not accompany her mother to Cassel, as she had been advised by her physicians at Aix to complete her treat-

ment by a sojourn of two or three weeks at Spa. Here she is reported to have found a new lover in the person of Talleyrand's friend, Casimir de Montrond, who had been exiled forty leagues from Paris two years before. Montrond had already passed his fortieth year, but he had not lost his reputation as a dandy and a wit. "Do you know, Duchesse, why I am quite fond of Montrond?" said Talleyrand one day; "it is because he has so few prejudices." — "Do you know, Duchesse, why I am very fond of M. de Talleyrand?" responded Montrond; "it is because he has none at all."[1]

Strange as it may seem, as being in contradiction to all his principles, M. de Montrond was a married man. He had espoused, from love, the Duchesse de Fleury, daughter of the Marquis de Coigny; but, suddenly disillusioned by marriage, he had abandoned his wife the day after their wedding, and resumed his bachelor life. Nevertheless, his wife was very attractive, and well worthy of being loved.[2]

Some writers have insinuated that the exile of M. de Montrond was due less to his political opinions than to his admiration for Her Imperial Highness. However this may be, Pauline seems to have thought that it was a pity that so charming and so distinguished a man should remain in exile, and she resolved to make him see the error of his ways. To facilitate her task, she accordingly established herself with her intended convert "in a beautiful mansion at the entrance of the town."[3]

But Pauline's new *lune de miel* was very brief; for, the last of September, she went to Antwerp, to meet the Emperor, who was making a tour of the Low Countries for the purpose of showing Marie-Louise to the former subjects of the House of Austria. Montrond followed her, and was immediately arrested, by order of the Emperor. He was confined at first in the Château of Ham — where Louis-Napoleon was imprisoned

[1] *Souvenirs intimes de Talleyrand*, 88.

[2] After being abandoned by her capricious husband, she resumed her maiden name of Aimée de Coigny, and it was under this name that she died, 17 January 1820. She was made celebrated by André Chénier under the name of *La jeune captive*. (See Charles Labitte, 2 *Études littéraires*, 184.)

[3] Mérode, 1 *Souvenirs*, 275.

thirty years later — and subsequently at Châtillon-sur-Seine, whence he succeeded in making his escape to England.

Some writers have asserted that the arrest of Montrond was due to his affair with Pauline, but it was more probably caused by his political activities. He was suspected of being involved in the intrigues of Talleyrand, and engaged in a treasonable correspondence with the British Government.

But Pauline did not remain long without consolation. According to a report, sent by the police commissioner of Antwerp, to Savary, the Minister of Police at Paris, " while she was at Antwerp, a Russian colonel, named Kouloukoff, who had been received by her at Aix-la-Chapelle, established himself at Malines, from which place he paid daily visits to Antwerp, arriving at night and departing before daybreak. . . . I am able to say that he did not sleep at an inn: I think that his visits had ceased before the departure of Mme. de Saluces."

This Mme. de Saluces was a *lectrice* and confidente of Pauline's, who had recently been dismissed, according to the princess, " for having misapplied funds entrusted to her "; but, if we may believe the version of the lady herself, because Montrond had fallen in love with her, and " the princesse had not been able to support the humiliation of occupying the second place in the heart of a perfidious libertine." As Mme. de Saluces had occupied the same house as the Princess Pauline, the remark of the police commissioner was a delicate way of conveying to Savary information from which he could draw his own conclusions.

This mysterious " Colonel Kouloukoff," whose name does not again appear in the annals of the time, may have been Pauline's old lover, Canouville, in the disguise of a Russian uniform.[4] On the 5 May that year, he had fought valiantly at Fuentes de Onoro, where his comrade, Septeuil, was so severely wounded. After the battle he had cared for his friend, and brought him back to France. He then disappeared from sight; but he may have rejoined Pauline again at Antwerp in October.

There is a legend, repeated in many of the memoirs of the

[4] See 7 Masson, 80.

Empire that, on one occasion, Pauline was so discourteous to Marie-Louise that the Emperor banished her from his Court. But the date given (1810), and the place (Brussels), are both manifestly incorrect, and there does not seem to be the slightest foundation for the story. The records show that she was present at all of the fêtes of the years 1810 and 1811, subsequent to the second marriage of the Emperor.

When Pauline returned to Paris, in October, Canouville was once more in high favor, and was seen constantly in her company. At a ball which she gave toward the end of November, he was so demonstrative in his attentions that the Emperor decided to end the affair definitely. He directed Berthier to send Canouville immediately to Dantzic, where he would take the position of major in the 2d Chasseurs. Under no circumstances would he be allowed to return to Paris, even with an order from the Minister of War, unless it had been countersigned by Berthier.

The colonel of the 2d Chasseurs was a regular martinet; and he made Canouville's life so miserable that he tried to get transferred. When Murat was in Paris, on his way to join the Grand Army in Poland, Pauline begged him to employ Canouville as one of his aides de camp. Murat, who was fond of Pauline, graciously assented, and made the application to the Minister of War. But Clarke replied that he could not make the assignment without the authority of the Emperor, who curtly refused: "I do not think it advisable," he said, "to appoint M. le chef d'escadron de Canouville to be one of the aides de camp of the King of Naples." [5]

"The continual scandals in the conduct of his sisters, of Pauline particularly," says M. Turquan, "were one of the causes, and a stronger one than generally supposed, of the disaffection of the masses toward Napoleon. The common people are honest, and become indignant over frailties at which the

[5] Until the beginning of the Russian campaign, Pauline kept up a very active correspondence with Canouville; then his letters became very infrequent, and finally ceased entirely. The last of October (1812), she read his name in the long list of officers killed at the terrible battle of Borodino (7 September).

world smiles, and over which certain historians think themselves obliged to pass complacently in silence." [6] And Stendhal remarks, with much reason, "It would have been much more fortunate for Napoleon had he never had any family!" [7]

As she was refused permission to go to Paris for the fêtes of the baptism, Élisa adopted the Emperor's suggestion that she should take a course of sea-baths at Leghorn. At this time, she was having a great deal of trouble in carrying out the Emperor's policy in Tuscany. The rigid enforcement of the Continental System by the French *douaniers* had ruined the port of Leghorn: commerce had almost entirely ceased; many merchants had been reduced to poverty, and the poorer classes were in the direst necessity. Great difficulty was also experienced in carrying out the conscription laws; and all her subjects were complaining of the tyrannical decrees which were forced upon them. But any attempt on the part of Élisa, to point out to the Emperor the disastrous effects of his policy, only brought upon her a severe reprimand. He was particularly irritated when, in December 1811, a Paris journal published an account of the enthusiasm with which his sister was received at Leghorn on the occasion of the launching of a new man-of-war: "Everywhere she was welcomed by cries of *Vive Élisa! Vive l'Empereur!*" He was so angry that he wrote his Minister of Police, bidding him put a stop to the publication of "these absurdities." He said that the public were interested in all that the sovereigns did, but they did not care to hear about the acts of the grand-duchess: "Europe troubles little about what the grand-duchess does. The less one speaks of her, the better it will be."

With increasing years, Élisa, who had always been very plain, had become positively ugly. Her olive complexion had turned to a "jaundiced yellow"; her thin figure had become even more emaciated; and she had lost nearly all her hair. Unlike her sisters, she paid but little attention to her toilette, and was content to let her Parisian modistes and milliners sup-

[6] Turquan, *Sœurs de Napoléon*, 297. [7] Stendhal, *Vie de Napoléon*, 24.

ply her with a moderate number of gowns and hats, for which she paid a fixed annual sum. She seemed to regard attention to such trivial details as beneath the consideration of the modern Semiramis!

The disgrace of Caroline was of very short duration: the two spouses were soon brought together again by the sentiment of a common danger. The fate which had overwhelmed Louis, and which had menaced Joseph and Jérôme, was now threatening to overtake Murat. If Caroline had no great love for Joachim, she had a very abiding affection for her throne of Naples. It was therefore arranged that the Queen should go to Paris, and endeavor to placate the Emperor. It was indeed high time.

On his arrival in Paris, Daure had seen the Emperor, and given him a circumstantial account of what was going on at Naples. The eyes of Napoleon were thus completely opened to the secret designs of the Carbonari, who had Murat in their leading strings. The words of Daure fully confirmed the reports of Durant, who had written: "It appears to me that the King is led away in a manner that is to be ascribed either to inordinate vanity, or to connections and counsellors of questionable loyalty." [8]

As soon as Napoleon was fully informed regarding Murat's conduct, he sent him a letter of which we now possess but a fragment: "You are surrounded by men who hold France in detestation and whose aim it is to work your ruin. I have warned you many times. Everything you write contrasts too glaringly with what you do." [9]

[8] Durant to Bassano, Naples, 18 August 1811.

[9] Napoleon to Murat, Compiègne, 30 August 1811. This letter, with some false additions, was read by Lord Castlereagh before the British Parliament, 2 May 1814. What is claimed to be a complete version is given by Norvins, formerly commissioner of police at Rome, in his *Portefeuille de 1813:*

"I have already made known to you what I think of your conduct. You are surrounded by men who hold France in detestation, and who are aiming at bringing about your downfall. I gave you useful advice some time ago, and I shall see by the way you act whether you are French at heart. . . . Remember that I made a king of you only *in the interests of my system.* Make no mistake

Napoleon did not limit himself to addressing rebukes to Murat; on the 27 August, by orders of the Emperor, La Vauguyon, the head of Murat's bureau of information at Paris, left the city hurriedly at four o'clock in the morning. At Capua, he found instructions awaiting him, to proceed no farther. Murat offered him the command of the Neapolitan forces in Spain, which he refused, and his name was then struck off the rolls of the Army, but he was left in the continued enjoyment of "his not inconsiderable emoluments." [10]

The expulsion of La Vauguyon was only a preliminary step on the part of the Emperor, to make Murat realize who was the master. On the 16 September the following orders were issued: Grenier was to throw a battalion, two if necessary, into Gaeta, and, if he deemed it advisable, to set up a French governor. Marshal Pérignon was to start next day to resume his duties as governor of Naples. In his secret instructions he was ordered "to assure His Majesty that the Emperor is in no way desirous of incorporating Naples with France." Finally, he was authorized to say that, "nothing but such conduct as his fear of imaginary dangers might lead him to adopt could in any way prejudice his tenure of a throne on which, as he himself is aware, the Emperor has placed him solely for the benefit of France and the furtherance of Imperial policy."

Copies of the orders to Grenier and Pérignon were sent to Durant, with instructions to leave Naples in case the King should be "so imprudent as to display any opposition to the Emperor's will." In that unlikely event, Napoleon formally declared his intention of informing the Senate of the King's action, and removing him from his throne.[11]

The ultimatum of the Emperor was clear and concise. There was no longer any question of a disagreement regarding minor

about the matter. If you cannot be a Frenchman, you will be nothing to me." (Napoleon to Murat, Compiègne, 30 August 1811.)

[10] Durant to Bassano, 11 September 1811; and Mier to Metternich, 20 September 1811.

[11] Bassano to Durant, 17 September 1811.

points of discipline. The Emperor had full proof that Murat was planning to assert his independence, and the King must submit to the Imperial authority, or refuse at his peril.

But Murat did not delay his submission until Grenier and Durant had received their orders, or until Pérignon had returned to Naples. The letter of the Emperor, which reached Naples about the 10 September, struck terror into Joachim's heart. He immediately patched up a reconciliation with the Queen, and arranged for her to leave for Paris. He felt that only the intervention of Caroline could avert the impending disaster. On the 15th he despatched a courier to the Emperor, with a letter "announcing that the Queen had decided to go to Paris to have the pleasure of greeting and embracing him once again."

About this same time, Napoleon was further exasperated against his brother-in-law by learning that certain of the Crown jewels of Spain, which had mysteriously disappeared from Madrid while Murat was in command there in 1808, had turned up in the hands of some jewellers at Naples. Aymé, First Chamberlain to the King, was called to Paris; and, a few days after his arrival, was interned at Vincennes, where he was closely questioned regarding the missing gems. He confessed that he had seen several of them at Naples, including the celebrated Peregrine Pearl,[12] which had been presented in 1579 to Philip the Second.

According to a report of the Russian minister to Naples, "Ferdinand the Seventh, on leaving Madrid for Bayonne, had confided the Crown jewels, valued at fifteen to eighteen millions, to the Marquis de Mos, grand master of the Court, who had consented to deliver them to Prince Murat only upon a formal receipt signed by Aymé." The chamberlain did not attempt to deny these facts; but he claimed that the jewels were no longer in his possession. There were found among his papers, however, nineteen letters in the hand-writing of Murat,

[12] This pearl, as large as a pigeon's egg, had been found upon the coast of Panama, and presented to the King of Spain. It was well-known throughout Europe, as one of the most precious gems of the Crown of Spain.

mostly of the year 1809, "which left no doubt that he had seriously thought of succeeding the Emperor under certain circumstances." The letters were delivered to the Emperor, who, according to Méneval, subsequently deposited them in the Imperial Archives.[13]

Caroline left Naples on the morning of the 19 September, Murat going with her as far as Capua. Travelling by easy stages, she reached Paris on the second day of October, and took up her residence with her uncle, Cardinal Fesch, while awaiting further orders from the Emperor, who was then absent from Paris.

Pending the return of the Emperor and Empress from Holland, on the 11 November, Caroline went several times to Saint-Cloud to see the King of Rome, and sought distraction in the fêtes and balls, some of which were given in her honor. Upon the return of the Emperor, he invited his sister to take up her quarters in the Pavillon de Flore at the Tuileries, and she went there on the 23 November.

Eager to pay her court, "she went every day to Saint-Cloud," until the Emperor's return to the Tuileries on the last day of November. Never had Caroline so well displayed her natural aptitude for diplomacy. Slowly and surely, by her tactfulness, her perseverance, and her charm she attained her object, and gradually repaired the rift between her all-powerful brother and her husband. It has been surmised that "she did not go to Paris with empty hands, and that the restoration of the Crown jewels of Spain contributed not a little to the success of her mission."[14] But, Napoleon's need of the services of his great cavalry leader in the coming campaign was probably a more important factor than the diamonds.

In April 1812, Murat finally received permission to leave Naples; and on the 4 May he rejoined Caroline at Saint-Cloud,

[13] As both Talleyrand and Fouché were seriously compromised by these letters, it is not surprising that they disappeared from the Archives, subsequent to the Restoration; as did also the note of Talleyrand advising Napoleon to deal summarily with the Duc d'Enghien. (See Vol. I, page 166.)

[14] *Cf.* 7 Masson, 205.

where she had been residing for the past month in the Pavillon d'Italie. A week later, he set out to join Napoleon at Dantzic, "happy at the prospect of finding an early opportunity of giving the Emperor proof of his inviolable attachment."

On the occasion of the baptism of the King of Rome, Hortense acted as the second godmother, in the place of Caroline. A week later, at the opening of the Corps Législatif, on the 16 June, she appeared in the tribune, at the side of the Empress, with Pauline, the Grand-Duke of Würzburg, and Eugène. That same evening, at the Imperial banquet, she sat at the left of Marie-Louise. Then, for four months, from July to November, she practically disappeared from public view. On the 4 July, she sent her two sons to Saint-Cloud, where they occupied the Pavillon d'Italie, until the departure of the Emperor for the Low Countries (19 September), when they went to Malmaison to stay with their grandmother.

It was publicly announced that the Queen of Holland had gone to Aix-en-Savoie, to take the waters. She was accompanied only by two of her ladies of honor, Mme. de Broc and Mlle. Cochelet. Meanwhile, Flahaut was caring for his rheumatism at Bourbonne, where his mother, Mme. de Souza, kept him well posted regarding the health of his *Sally* (Hortense).

The season at Aix seems to have been as brilliant as usual, and there were many distinguished visitors, but all of them were strangely silent, in their letters, regarding the doings of the Queen. On the Emperor's birthday, the 15 August, she gave a charming fête in honor of the occasion. Two weeks later she set out for Geneva, with a Swiss passport, given to her under a fictitious name. It was announced that she intended to pass a fortnight in the residence of the Empress Joséphine at Pregny, and then make a trip through Switzerland, or perhaps join her brother at Monza.

On the 20 August, Flahaut wrote his mother from Bourbonne: "From the 23d write to me at *my cousin's*, using the same address as you did for her. . . . Unless you see an ex-

ceptional chance, please do not make any definite arrangement about the *châtelaine* before I get back." [15]

At Pregny, Hortense installed herself in the house purchased by her mother in the month of April that same year, and which was fully furnished. The 14 September she wrote her friend Mme. de Boucheporn: " I am going to take a little trip to see my brother. I shall be at Paris between the 10 and the 15 October; do not write me after the 20th of this month, for I shall be continually on the move. However, if my children should be ill, Lavalette will send me a courier. In case the Empress [Joséphine] should leave home, my children should return, either to the Pavillon d'Italie, or Paris."

According to the *Journal de Paris,* Hortense returned to the capital on the 10 October. There, in a mansion of the Rue d'Anjou, she gave birth on the 21 October to a male child, who was declared at the *mairie* on the following day, as the son of Louise-Émilie-Coralie-Fleury, wife of Auguste-Jean-Hyacinthe Demorny, proprietor at San Domingo. This child was the future comte and duc de Morny under the Second Empire.[16]

That there was no doubt or mystery regarding the real paternity of the child Charles-Auguste-Louis-Joseph [17] is proved by the arms granted to Morny when his half-brother, Napoleon the Third, created him a French duc, on the 7 July 1862. The Comte de Flahaut bore *d'argent à trois merlettes de sable,* and this same device appears at the beginning of the description of the arms of the Duc de Morny.[18]

Hortense appeared upon the scene again at the moment that the Emperor and Empress returned from their long trip to

[15] Kerry, 242. The *cousin* was Hortense, and the *châtelaine,* undoubtedly, the nurse who was to look after her baby.

[16] That this Demorny actually existed, is shown by Lord Kerry, who prints his will, made 13 November 1812. This will also reveals the fact that Louise-Émilie-Coralie had (rather obligingly) left for San Domingo a few months after her supposed confinement, and that nothing had since been heard of her. (See Kerry, 261 *et seq.*)

[17] The name of *Louis* was doubtless a delicate tribute to a husband who had not been consulted!

[18] See 7 Masson, 159.

Holland and the Banks of the Rhine (11 November). She received a most cordial welcome from Napoleon, and was present at all of the fêtes of the Court. Twice a week, Monday and Thursday, she appeared at the regular receptions at the Tuileries, and on Sunday at the Imperial dinner. No ball was given, without her presence. On New Year's day, the Emperor gave her a medallion portrait of himself and the Empress, valued at nearly fifty thousand francs, and a similar one to her son, the Grand-Duc de Berg, worth twelve thousand.

On the 22 April 1812, Eugène arrived in Paris, to receive the final instructions of the Emperor for the campaign about to open. His visit was a great joy to Hortense, who was devoted to her brother.

After the final reception at Saint-Cloud, on Monday the 4 May, a few days before the departure of the Emperor and Empress for Dresden, Hortense went to Saint-Leu, where she received a short visit from her mother. Then Joséphine left for Italy, to be present at the accouchement of her daughter-in-law; and, a little later, Hortense set out for Aix-la-Chapelle, this time accompanied by her two sons. The departure of the Emperor was a signal for the scattering of the entire family; and soon, Madame, Fesch, Pauline, and Julie were reunited at Aix-en-Savoie, where Hortense was very glad not to be present.

CHAPTER FORTY

APRIL — JUNE 1812

EVE OF THE GREAT WAR

Napoleon Leaves for Dresden — His Journey — Reception at Dresden — Arrival of the German Princes — Exclusion of Murat — The Emperor and Empress of Austria — Napoleon's Incessant Labors — Final Overtures for Peace — The Life at Dresden — The Formal Dinners — Announcement of *The Emperor!* — The "Poor Uncle" — Napoleon, the Emperor of Europe — His Public Appearances — Arrival of the Prussian Princes — The Emperor's Departure for Poland — Dispersal of the Sovereigns — Napoleon's Reception by the Poles — His Journey to the Frontier — His Arrival at the Niemen — His Reconnaissance Disguised as a Polish Officer — His Fall from His Horse — The Bridges Built — The Grand Army Crosses the Niemen — Napoleon's Good Humor

ON THE 30 March 1812, Napoleon moved with the Empress to Saint-Cloud, for the purpose of obtaining a little repose prior to his departure for the campaign in Russia. Here he was detained for several weeks by an unforeseen difficulty, which was destined to have considerable effect upon the outcome of the war. The 1811 crops in France had been a failure, and during the following winter the price of bread had become so dear as to cause great suffering among the poorer classes. The Emperor was therefore forced to postpone his departure for a full month, in order to direct personally the work of relief.[1]

Finally, on the 9 May, without returning to Paris, without any proclamation to the nation or message to the Senate, the Emperor left Saint-Cloud under the pretext "of going on a tour of inspection to the Grand Army assembled upon the Vistula."[2] On the eve of every other campaign, from Marengo to Wagram, Napoleon had given his reasons and published the documents

[1] See 1 Pasquier, 497–509.
[2] *Moniteur*, 10 May 1812.

which explained his course. This time — nothing. And by way of a " curtain-raiser " to this war, the most formidable he had ever undertaken, he had arranged for a fortnight of fêtes at Dresden: " Never had a departure for the Army so much resembled a pleasure trip."

The Emperor, accompanied by Marie-Louise, left Saint-Cloud at six o'clock on the morning of the 9 May, in the new travelling coach built for him the previous year.[3] They had no military escort, but were accompanied by a suite of thirty-eight persons. Out of consideration for the Empress, the journey was made by easy stages, stopping for the nights at six places en route. The first night was passed at Châlons-sur-Marne, and the second, at Metz, where the Emperor visited the fortifications, and held a review. At Mayence, there was another review. Here, they crossed the Rhine; then turned a little to the south, passing in the vicinity of Würtemberg and Bavaria. At every point in the Confederation of the Rhine, they were greeted by the German princes, in an attitude of servile homage. At Mayence, they found the princes of Anhalt and Hesse-Darmstadt; at Würzburg, the King of Würtemberg and the Grand-Duke of Baden. Napoleon travelled with all of the state and the luxury of an Asiatic potentate. Entire populations had been called out, to repair and smooth the routes; while, at night, large logs of wood, piled up by the side of the road, were set on fire, and illuminated the passage of the Imperial carriage with almost the light of day.

Contrary to his usual custom, the Emperor had not definitely arranged the itinerary of his journey, the stages being made to suit the convenience of the Empress. This troubled the King of Saxony, who feared that the Imperial party might arrive unexpectedly. So, on the 15 May, he proceeded with the Queen to the little city of Freiberg, situated about twenty miles from Dresden. However, the night, and the following morning, passed without any news; and it was not until late in the

[3] This carriage, which he employed in all his subsequent campaigns, was captured by the Prussians at Waterloo, and was later for many years in the collection of Mme. Tussaud at London. (See Vol. I, page 210.)

afternoon that the Imperial carriages rolled in, and stopped to change horses. After a hurried exchange of greetings, the two Courts set out together for Dresden. The capital was reached at eleven o'clock in the evening, and the Imperial guests were received with salvos of artillery and the ringing of all the church bells in the city. The Emperor was conducted to the royal château, where he was lodged in the former apartments of Augustus the Second, King of Poland and Elector of Saxony.

The following day, a *Te Deum* was chanted, "to thank Heaven for the Emperor's arrival"; and there was a reception for the Court and the diplomatic corps. The Russian minister was present, with his colleagues, and was particularly distinguished by the Emperor. In this, some saw a favorable augury for peace; but others, better advised, said that the Conqueror, ready to strike, was hiding his claws in a *patte de velours*.[4]

In accepting the hospitality of the sovereigns of Saxony, the Emperor had stipulated that he was to be at home in his palace, and have his own table and service. He had brought with him a regular army of attendants: the principal members of his staff and his military household, a complete service of chamberlains, pages, and other employés. He had ordered transported to Dresden his table silver and dishes; and all of the Crown jewels. He wished to dazzle all the vassal kings and princes whom he had summoned to meet him at Dresden.

The princes of the Confederation of the Rhine began to appear on the morning following his arrival, and continued to come in a steady stream. On the 17th, there arrived the dukes of Weimar, Coburg, and Mecklenburg, and the Grand-Duke of Würzburg. In the evening, the Court of Saxony received Queen Catherine, of Westphalia, who came at the special invitation of the Emperor. Her presence was all the more remarkable because he had rigorously excluded from the reunion all of the

[4] Most of the details of the Dresden visit are derived from an unpublished *Journal* of the grand master of the Court of Saxony, which was largely used by M. Masson and M. Vandal. (See Masson, *Marie-Louise*, 381–393; and 3 Vandal, 402–455.)

other members of his family. From the first, Napoleon had displayed a warm affection for this charming princess, who loved her husband so devotedly, and whose conduct was in such contrast with that of his own sisters.

Eugène had passed through Dresden a few days before the arrival of the Emperor; but it was only to appear and disappear, leaving behind him a pleasant impression. Jérôme had been refused permission to leave his headquarters. In the case of Murat, the prohibition had been most decided, and more marked. Although Dresden would have seemed to be practically on the direct route from Paris to Poland, the Emperor had dictated for him an itinerary which avoided the Saxon capital. Napoleon pretended that his motives were to save the amour-propre of his father-in-law, the Emperor Francis; but this was a pretext, rather than a reason. He feared the result of bringing this parvenu king in contact with the sovereigns of ancient race: "His head would be turned," said Napoleon, "if the Emperor Francis addressed to him a few pleasant words."

On the afternoon of the 19th, the Emperor and Empress of Austria arrived, and received the same honors as Napoleon, except that the Saxon sovereigns did not go to meet them. Installed at the palace, they were preparing to make a call on the Emperor of the French, when the visit of Napoleon was announced.

This first interview was formal and embarrassing. It was the first time that Napoleon had met the Empress Béatrice, and he had not seen Francis since their conference at his headquarters near the mill of Sarochitz, two days after the battle of Austerlitz, when the Emperor of Austria came to make his submission. Timid and awkward, conscious of his inferiority, Francis was very reserved, and displayed no emotion except when he took in his arms "his dear Louise."

The air of health and happiness which beamed from the features of Louise seemed to cause her stepmother more surprise than satisfaction. Béatrice was disappointed because she was unable to pity the fate of Louise, married to this "hateful despot."

Before leaving Paris, Louise had written her father, probably at the instigation of Napoleon, that she hoped to see him at Dresden. "I am sure that you will not refuse my request," she said, "and that you will also give me the pleasure of bringing with you Mama and my brothers and sisters, that I may also have the privilege of seeing them." [5] Napoleon was therefore much disappointed when he found that the Austrian sovereigns were not accompanied by any of the members of their family, particularly the young Archduke Ferdinand, the heir to the throne, who was then sixteen years of age. The Emperor would have liked, during his sojourn at Dresden, to promenade surrounded by a cortège of archdukes. When the Empress excused the absence of the young archduke, on the plea that he was timid, immature, and somewhat savage, the Emperor exclaimed: "You have only to let me have him for a year, and you will see how I will brighten him up for you." [6]

Dresden had been spared the presence of many French troops, their march having been directed so as to avoid the city. Only a few detachments of the Imperial Guard displayed in the streets their splendid bearing. The Prince de Neuchâtel (Berthier) had established in the Brühl Palace the offices of the Grand Army; and the Duc de Bassano (Maret) had taken possession of the Hôtel Salmour for his chancellery. Comte Metternich had arrived shortly before his sovereigns; and Prince de Hatzfeldt had come from Berlin, as envoy extraordinary, to beg permission for the King of Prussia to present himself. The streets of the city, especially in the vicinity of the palaces, were thronged with people, who assembled to witness the coming and going of the principal personages. But the Emperor, at first, remained most of the time shut up in his cabinet, absorbed in his incessant labors.

On his arrival, in fact, Napoleon had resumed at once his rôle of sovereign and generalissimo. While strengthening his Grand Army on the Vistula, he was organizing a second line in Germany, to hold the country in subjection, and furnish re-

[5] Masson, 376.
[6] Cited 3 Vandal, 407.

enforcements for the invasion. At the same time, he was stimulating his ministers to conclude the treaties with Sweden and Turkey.

On the 20 May, a courier left Dresden for Saint Petersburg, bearing a long despatch for the ambassador, Lauriston, who was instructed to make one more effort to see the Czar in his camp at Vilna, and resume the negotiations for peace. Napoleon had long since abandoned all hopes of coming to an amicable understanding with Alexander, but his object was to gain a few more days — the time for the vegetation in Russia to push so as to furnish fodder for his animals; and the time also to organize and preside over his Court of Sovereigns.

Napoleon had regulated his life at Dresden according to a régime at once pompous and severe. At nine o'clock in the morning he usually held his *lever*, which was attended by all the German princes. Then he passed to the apartment of the Empress, and was present at the *Toilette*, where the sovereign, surrounded by her ladies, who had finished dressing her, admitted to her presence a favored few. The Empress of Austria was generally present, and was green with envy at regarding the magnificent robes and jewels of her stepdaughter. Frequently, Marie-Louise presented her with some article which she had particularly admired, and Béatrice accepted the gift with a mixture of satisfaction and disgust, happy to possess it, and humiliated to receive it.[7]

In the evening, the sovereigns assembled for dinner in the apartment of the Emperor of the French. There, in his manner of making his entrée, and being announced, Napoleon affected a grandiose simplicity, which separated him from all the other sovereigns, and raised him above them. His invited guests were announced by their titles and qualities: to begin with, there were Excellencies and Highnesses without number; then the Majesties: Their Majesties the King and Queen of Saxony; Their Imperial and Royal Apostolic Majesties; Her Majesty the Empress of the French, Queen of Italy. When all these

[7] Durand, *Mémoires*, 140.

sonorous appellations had echoed through the salons, the august gathering was complete, and the master could appear. Then, after a brief interval of time, the double doors were thrown wide open, and the usher said simply: *L'Empereur!* [8]

He entered gravely, his brow smooth, or lined with care, according to the occasion; saluted to the right and left; addressed a few persons; and then the procession formed, to go to the table. "Napoleon, his hat upon his head, marched first; a few steps behind him advanced the Emperor of Austria, giving his arm to his daughter, the Empress Marie-Louise, which could explain why this monarch had his head bare; the other kings and princes who formed part of this cortège followed the two emperors, with their hats in their hands." [9] Only the Empress of Austria was wanting in this display: alleging her feeble health, she had herself conducted directly to the table in a rolling-chair, and this was her manner of protesting against the Napoleonic ceremonial.

The Emperor Napoleon presided over the repast with great urbanity. It was on the occasion of one of these banquets that, recalling the memories of the Revolution, he declared that things would have taken another course if *his poor uncle* had displayed more firmness. The "poor uncle" was Louis the Sixteenth, whose great-nephew Napoleon had become by his marriage with Marie-Louise!

At this moment, perhaps the greatest in the marvellous career of Napoleon, his sovereignty was tacitly recognized by all the monarchs, and he was really the Emperor of Europe. He was the heir of Rome and of Charlemagne, the Roman Emperor of the French nation, in succession to the line of German Cæsars; but the preëminence, often merely honorary, of the ancient empire, was transformed in his hands into an overpowering reality. We realize now that such unbridled authority was an ephemeral miracle of genius, which violated the laws of history. Already, the excess of Imperial grandeur had prepared

[8] 3 Vandal, 415.
[9] Baudus, *Études sur Napoléon*, 338.

the way for its downfall. Disaster was close at hand: the future was big with Fate.

" Nevertheless," says M. Vandal, " let us for an instant limit our vision to the present. Before going further, let us pause upon this crest and enjoy the spectacle. For it is a keen and marvellous pleasure only to see these emperors and kings, brought up to detest France; these representatives of dynasties who for centuries have envied and hated her; these monarchs, sons and grandsons of enemies; these descendants of Frederick, and these successors of the Ferdinands and Leopolds, all bowing their heads before the man who had carried so high the glory and the destiny of our race, and he holding them under his foot, humiliated, prostrated, annihilated, their foreheads in the dust." [10]

During the final days of his stay, Napoleon satisfied the public curiosity by appearing more frequently in the streets. On the 25th, a boar hunt was organized in the royal domain of Moritzburg, and the Emperor was the cynosure of all eyes, although he wore a " very simple hunting costume." Two days later, he left the palace on horseback, with a brilliant suite, crossed to the right bank of the Elbe, and made the circuit of the city, upon the heights which encircle and dominate Dresden. In his usual plain uniform, with the legendary hat, mounted on his white horse, he went at a walk, preceding his brilliant staff, with their embroidered uniforms.

On the 26 May, the last visitor was announced: the King of Prussia arrived, followed by his son, the Prince Royal, for whom the King solicited the position of aide de camp on the staff of Napoleon. The same day, Narbonne returned from his trip to Vilna to see the Czar. To the rather vague propositions of Napoleon, Alexander had replied with his usual insincere protestations: " I will never be the first to draw the sword; I do not wish to have the responsibility in the eyes of Europe for the blood which will be shed in this war."

In the meantime, Napoleon had gained the real points he sought for in his negotiations: the Czar's forces remained im-

[10] 3 Vandal, 426.

mobile behind their frontier, awaiting the invasion, and the long Russian winter was at an end. Two or three weeks more, and there would be sufficient forage for the horses. The time had come, and Napoleon was in haste to leave the artificial air of the Court, and find himself once more in his true element, at the head of his armies.

During the afternoon of the 28 May, Napoleon took a formal leave of the Court which he had brought together at Dresden. That night there was but little sleep in the palace, where the military household were making the last preparations for the departure. At three hours after midnight Napoleon left his apartment, paused a moment at the guard-room to receive the final adieux of Frederick-Augustus, then descended to the vestibule where he tenderly embraced Marie-Louise, before entering his travelling carriage. It was already light, although the sun had not yet risen, when he drove out of the courtyard, traversed the river, and took the easterly road, to Bautzen. His way lay straight toward the dawn, and the great escort which followed him faced the sun as it rose an hour later over the forest. "With the rattle and the clatter of his passage under that May dawn through the gates of Dresden, and the salute of the Guard at the bridge, the last act of the Revolutionary story had begun." [11]

On the 30th, the King of Prussia left on his return to Potsdam, infinitely satisfied with "the precious days" that he had spent at Dresden.[12] Marie-Louise remained until the 4 July, when she went to Prague, to make a visit to her family. An hour after her departure the Queen of Westphalia set out for Cassel. The Grand-Duke of Würzburg took the route of Töplitz, and the assembly of sovereigns was dispersed within a few days. Dresden resumed its usual air of peace and tranquillity. "It was a fine dream," said the King of Saxony, "a fine dream, but too short." [13] Did the good King some-

[11] Belloc, *Napoleon's Campaign of 1812*, 7.
[12] Diplomatic circular, Prussian Archives, 250.
[13] Serra to Maret, 5 June 1812.

times tremble for the superhuman fortune to which he had linked his own?

It is probable, indeed it is almost certain, that Napoleon himself realized the dangers before him, but he expected to surmount them, by grace of his invincible good fortune; thanks also to the careful measures which he had taken to assure the success of the campaign.

From Dresden, Napoleon went directly to Posen, where he arrived on the evening of the second day. Here he was received by the Poles with the greatest enthusiasm. The whole population of the city turned out to welcome the "liberator," with an empressement which surpassed even the days of 1806.

He had announced his arrival at Warsaw, although he had no intention of visiting that capital. His idea was to have the Russians believe that his principal attack would be made toward Grodno, so as to draw their attention and their forces to the south. On leaving Posen, therefore, he inclined to the left, abandoning the route to Warsaw, and reached the Vistula at Thorn. Here, he was in the midst of the Grand Army, with the Guard around him, and his corps to the right and left. After a stop of three days, to make some final arrangements, he proceeded to Dantzic, where he arrived on the evening of the 7 June, and descended at the residence of General Rapp, the commandant of the fortress.

At Dantzic, Napoleon passed three days before proceeding to Königsberg, where he made another brief stop, and then continued his route to the Niemen. Everywhere, en route, he reviewed the divisions of his troops, who were approaching the frontier by forced marches. To Davout, to Oudinot, to Ney, to Mortier, who commanded the corps of the left wing, he indicated their direction and their destination, in order that the van of his army might be upon the banks of the Niemen on the 23 June. Then he himself, carried away by his ardor, took his carriage and preceded his soldiers.

Late in the afternoon of the 22 June, he traversed a vast forest of pine which covered the borders of the river, and

stopped for supper at the home of an obscure village curé. At eleven o'clock, he again entered his coach, and resumed his course, followed by his usual travelling companions when in campaign, Duroc, Caulaincourt, and Bessières, but leaving behind the rest of his military household. Only one officer of the general staff, the future Marshal de Castellane, was able to keep up with the party, by covering seventy miles on the same horse. Surrounded by a weak escort, but protected by the masses of cavalry which were reconnoitring the country on every side, the Emperor pushed on to the river, eager to select the point of passage.

By his express orders, no French soldier had yet displayed his uniform on the bank of the Niemen. He hoped to make the passage before the enemy realized that the corps of the Grand Army were so near at hand. Only a few squadrons of Polish lancers were observing and guarding the left bank of the stream, and the Russians on the other shore had long been accustomed to their presence.

On the night of the 22–23 June, one of these squadrons of cavalry was bivouacked in the forest, about four miles back from the river, nearly opposite to Kovno. In this northern latitude, on almost the longest day of the year, the night was very short, and dawn was beginning to break at two o'clock in the morning when the sentries signalled the approach of a travelling carriage. The berline, drawn by six heavy Norman horses, drew up in the light of the bivouac, and two officers descended: the Emperor and Berthier. Napoleon was covered with dust, his face lined and drawn with the fatigue of the journey. He was immediately recognized and surrounded by the Polish officers. A few rapid questions, and he learned that the village in the distance was Alexota, where the road ended; beyond, was the Niemen, the river frontier of Russia. The village, situated on an eminence, dominates the river, and affords a good view of Kovno, on the opposite bank. From this point, the Emperor decided to make his reconnaissance.[14]

[14] Soltyk, *Napoléon en 1812*, 8–10. The author was a Polish cavalry officer, who from that day was attached to the Imperial general staff.

Fearing that his well-known uniform, and his hat with the tricolored cockade, might attract the attention of the enemy on the other bank, Napoleon decided to change his costume: he would go *incognito*.[15] Removing his coat of an officer of the Chasseurs de la Garde, he borrowed the redingote of a Polish colonel. Finding the chapska too heavy, for his head was very sensitive, Napoleon donned a simple *bonnet de police*. Ordering Berthier to assume the same disguise, he walked to the town, accompanied by the Polish officers. He took possession of the principal house of the village, the windows of which afforded a good view of the river and the opposite shore. With his marvellous eye for topography, Napoleon read like a map the scene before him, and decided upon his plans.

He then returned on foot to the bivouac, and resumed his uniform. His saddle-horses and several members of his staff had arrived. After a hasty breakfast, the Emperor mounted, and, followed by several of his aides, proceeded to make a second reconnaissance. Turning to the right, and traversing the fields, he returned to the river, and sought a place for crossing above the village. It was not his intention to make the passage in face of Kovno, and he searched for a favorable place to throw across the bridges a few miles farther up-stream, thus taking the Russian position in flank. Having selected a point near the village of Poniemon, where the river makes a sharp loop to the west, the Emperor returned to the place where he had left his staff.

Then, followed by the principal officers of his staff, Duroc, Berthier, Caulaincourt, Bessières, Davout, Haxo, who galloped behind him, he set out for another tour of inspection, along the heights, to select the positions for the camps of the different corps as they arrived. Riding in his usual careless fashion, with loose reins, his horse made a mis-step, Napoleon turned in his saddle, and fell heavily to the ground. It was a bad omen, and some one remarked under breath: "A Roman would have gone back."

[15] Corresp., 18755.

He had received only a slight contusion on the hip; he got up without assistance, and at once remounted. A few minutes later, Berthier seized the hand of Caulaincourt, who rode next to him, and whispered: "It would be much better for us not to pass the Niemen: this fall is a bad augury."[16]

The Emperor finally returned to the spot where he had ordered his tents erected, dismounted, and dictated a long memorandum, admirable for its clearness, covering the passage of the river.[17]

Just before nightfall, he again mounted his horse, and visited the different camps. He then returned to his tent, which had been pitched in another place, overlooking the river. After sunset, under a new moon, the engineers began the construction of the three pontoon bridges, which were finished with remarkable rapidity. By eleven o'clock, the corps of Davout had begun the crossing. From that time on, the troops continued to pass the river in three ceaseless streams. No sounds were heard except the steady tramp of thousands of feet — no loud cries of command; and no shots in the gloom, as the enemy had abandoned the farther shore. The corps of Davout was followed by the corps of Oudinot; then came the Guard, and finally the corps of Ney.

The Emperor was up at three o'clock, and was among the first to cross. He was in excellent spirits, and hummed his favorite air: "*Malbrook s'en va-t-en guerre.*"

All that day, and the next, the immense host continued to cross; Kovno was occupied, and a fourth bridge was thrown across opposite the town. By Thursday night, the 25 June, the Grand Army had occupied the right bank without opposition. The Russian tragedy had begun!

[16] Cited 3 Vandal, 476.

[17] Corresp., 18857.

CHAPTER FORTY-ONE

JUNE — JULY 1812

FINAL PEACE NEGOTIATIONS

The Czar's Fabian Policy — Reasons for Its Adoption — Alexander at Vilna — Ball on the Eve of the Campaign — Vilna Abandoned — Balachof Sent to Napoleon — Alexander's Ultimatum — Balachof Meets Murat — His Cool Greeting by Davout — Napoleon's Erroneous Impression — He Defers the Interview — Vilna Occupied — Arrival of the Emperor — His Cold Reception — His Interview with Balachof — He Endeavors to Inspire Terror — He Invites Balachof to Dinner — Their Verbal Duel — Napoleon Vents His Spleen on Caulaincourt — The Aide de Camp Threatens to Resign — He Is Appeased with Difficulty — End of the Negotiations

AMONG the myths of history, one of the most generally accredited is, that the military policy adopted by the Czar in the Russian campaign was premeditated, and decided on in advance. Such was far from being the case. It is true that a Fabian policy had been advocated by Alexander's Prussian adviser, Pfuhl; also that Comte Rostoptchine, the newly appointed governor of Moscow, wrote the Czar the day that Napoleon crossed the Niemen: "Your Empire has two powerful defenders, its extent and its climate: the Emperor of Russia will be formidable at Moscow, terrible at Kazan, invincible at Tobolsk." [1]

But this was not the opinion of nearly all the men who composed the military council of Alexander. In the warm debates which took place during the weeks preceding the invasion, the majority were strongly in favor of an offensive policy. Many maintained that Russian Poland should not be yielded without a struggle, and that battle should be delivered before Vilna. Nearly all were opposed to the plan of Pfuhl, which was finally adopted from force of circumstances, rather than from any other reason.

[1] Schildner, 245.

Paradoxical as it may seem, the main cause of Napoleon's failure was the excess of his precautions to insure success: "one of the reasons which led to the failure of the enterprise was the grandeur and the perfection of the preparations." [2] There were no roads worthy of the name in Russia, and it was physically impossible to supply such an enormous host. From the very outset, the success of the campaign was jeopardized by the impedimenta: there were too many wagons, and far too many camp-followers.

His army also was too large, and he would have done better had he left half his forces in reserve behind the Niemen. As soon as the overwhelming numerical superiority of the French forces was known, the main Russian army, under Barclay, was ordered to abandon Vilna; and, a little later, Bagration, who commanded the second army, was directed also to retire, and to join the main army as best he could. "The rules which they had laid down on paper gave place at once to a spontaneous inspiration, which showed safety and victory behind them, in the immensity of the spaces, and which led the different corps to recoil while concentrating. The good fortune of the Russians in this campaign was to conform less to a plan than to an instinct." [3]

At the opening of the campaign, Alexander was with his main army at Vilna, where the imminence of hostilities had made little change in his usual life of pleasure. He was surrounded by a small Court, and there was a series of brilliant receptions and assemblies. For the 24 June, the officers of his staff and of the garrison had arranged in his honor a *bal champêtre* at the country estate of the Comtesse Bennigsen. The mansion, which was quite simple, was surrounded, as customary in Poland, by a magnificent park, and nothing had been omitted to embellish nature. On the lawn, in front of the villa, a ball-room had been erected. Here, the ball began, under the open sky; and then, as darkness fell, was transferred to the rooms of the house. During the course of the evening,

[2] 3 Vandal, 233.
[3] 3 Vandal, 493.

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while the long line of couples was engaged in the *polonaise,* the national dance, General Balachof, the Minister of Police, approached Alexander, and whispered in his ear several words, with an accent of deep emotion: a message received from Kovno announced that the French were crossing the Niemen in enormous masses. The invasion had begun! [4]

On hearing this news, Alexander retained his sang-froid: his face remained impassible. He directed the minister to keep the news secret; and it was not until after he left, an hour later, that the report spread through the assembly. Then the guests hurriedly took their departure.

Returning to Vilna, Alexander spent the rest of the night in working on a diplomatic note, to be sent from Saint Petersburg, in answer to the French manifesto issued a few days before. Then he prepared an order of the day to his armies, couched in dignified terms. In his proclamation to his troops, Napoleon had said: "Russia is drawn on by Fatality; her destinies must be accomplished." Against the blind goddess invoked by his rival, the Czar placed his trust in Providence: "God," he said, "is against the aggressor." [5]

Alexander then began his preparations to leave Vilna on the 27th; but, prior to his departure, he sent for Balachof, who was one of his aides de camp, as well as Minister of Police, and ordered him to seek an interview with the Emperor Napoleon, as bearer of a final offer to negotiate terms of peace. Alexander had but little hope of success, but his object was to influence public opinion in Europe.[6] Napoleon had sent to him his aide

[4] No historian seems to have remarked the great similarity of this occasion to the ball given at Brussels, by the Duchess of Richmond, on the eve of Waterloo, almost exactly three years later. Every one will recall the well-known lines of Byron, in *Childe Harold* — "There was a sound of revelry by night," and so on.

[5] Cited 3 Vandal, 492.

[6] The very circumstantial report of Balachof on his mission was published in 1882 among the *Papers of the Academy of Sciences of Saint Petersburg.* Thiers mentions it in his history, and it was largely drawn on by Tatistchef and Vandal. (See Tatistchef, *Alexandre 1er et Napoléon,* 590–609; and 3 Vandal, 495–498, 517–527.)

de camp, Narbonne; he would send one of his own aides de camp. Napoleon had written him to express his desire to exhaust all means of conciliation, before having recourse to arms; Alexander would reply in the same vein. In his letter he disavowed the demand for passports, made by his ambassador, Kourakine, which had served Napoleon as a pretext for the attack. "If Your Majesty," he said, "has not the intention of shedding the blood of your people for a misunderstanding of this kind; and if you will consent to withdraw your forces from Russian territory, I shall regard what has taken place as *non avenu,* and an arrangement between us remains always possible." [7]

In dismissing Balachof, the Czar stated to him verbally that the negotiations could begin at once, if Napoleon so wished; but subject to the condition, absolute, essential, unchangeable, that the French army should first repass the Niemen: "So long as one soldier under arms remained on Russian soil, the Emperor Alexander — he declared on his word of honor — would neither pronounce nor listen to a word of peace." [8]

Balachof set out at once, and encountered the French outposts at several leagues from Vilna. He advanced to meet them, with a trumpeter, who sounded the parley. He was ordered to halt, while a messenger was sent to notify the King of Naples, who was never far behind his advance-guard. After a short delay, an aide de camp of Murat arrived, with orders to conduct Balachof to the headquarters of Prince d'Eckmühl (Davout), situated a little behind, and nearer to the Emperor.

Continuing his route, with an escort of French officers, Balachof soon met a brilliant staff, at the head of which, by his "somewhat theatrical costume," he had no difficulty in recognizing King Murat in person. The King and the Russian envoy both dismounted, and exchanged a few amicable words.

[7] Tatistchef, 588.

[8] This quotation, and those which follow, are taken from Balachof's report, above mentioned.

In all sincerity, Murat declared: "I much desire that the two Emperors may come to an understanding, and not prolong the war which has just begun, much against my wish."

The reception which Balachof met at the severely plain headquarters of Davout was much less cordial. The marshal, occupied with directing the march of his large corps of 75,000 men, was not pleased at being disturbed by this *parlementaire*. "Give me your letter," he said, "and I will see that it is forwarded." When the envoy replied that his master's orders were to deliver the letter personally to the Emperor, Davout lost all patience, and said angrily: "Never mind; here, you are with us, and you must do what we require."

While an officer bore the letter to the Emperor, Davout invited the Russian to dine with himself and his staff. During the meal, the marshal made little effort to converse with the envoy, whom he regarded as a spy, sent to observe the French movements, and report upon their positions and resources. He was in haste to be freed from his unwelcome guest.

The arrival of the Russian envoy was soon known throughout the French army, and created a great sensation. At the general headquarters, where many of the officers were opposed to the war, it aroused a vague hope of peace. In the case of the Emperor, it only served to increase his confidence of ultimate success. To Berthier, he remarked: "My brother Alexander, who showed himself so arrogant with Narbonne, is ready now to come to an understanding; he is frightened. My manœuvres have routed the Russians: inside of two months, they will be at my feet."

Meanwhile, the Emperor was in no haste to see Balachof, and instructed Davout to keep him pending further orders. There was much of the *cabotin* in the nature of Napoleon: he was always attentive to manage his effects, and careful to arrange his *mise en scène;* he calculated on producing a stronger impression on the Russian envoy if he received him in the Imperial palace, in the very cabinet of the Emperor Alexander. He would therefore put off the interview until after the occupation of Vilna, when he would have Balachof conducted to the

city where the envoy had received his instructions from his master.

The advance-guard of the French cavalry reached Vilna on the night of the 27–28 June, and there was quite a lively skirmish between them and the retiring Russians, in which the brother of General de Ségur was made prisoner. But, much to the disappointment of the Emperor, the enemy abandoned, without joining battle, this strongly fortified place, "the country the most strategic that one could encounter." [9]

The following morning (28 June), the city was occupied by the French cavalry. Although the Imperial troops were not received with the same enthusiasm as in Poland, the majority of the population were prepared to give them a cordial welcome; but the disorder of the French entry checked the national ardor. The soldiers treated Vilna as a conquered town of the enemy, forcing the shops, entering the houses, and seizing every object of value which they found.

At nine o'clock the same morning, the Emperor arrived, and expected to be received, as at Posen, with triumphal arches, and an outpouring of the people. Instead, he found a dead city: the streets were empty, the shops and houses barricaded. Riding through the city, he came to the wooden bridge by which the Russians had retired, and found it in flames, as well as the immense warehouses, stored with provisions of every kind. After viewing this scene with a very sober face, the Emperor rode back to the palace, where he proposed to take up his lodging.

By this time, the news of the Emperor's arrival must have spread through the place, but the aspect of the city had not changed, and Napoleon could not conceal his chagrin. He was far from having the air of a conqueror, as he dismounted, entered the palace, and took possession of the cabinet of his "brother Alexander." As he mentally compared the passionate enthusiasm of his reception in the cities of the Grand-Duchy with the coldness of the capital of Lithuania, he could not re-

[9] Words of Jomini, quoted in a letter of the Duc de Bassano, 21 July 1812.

frain from remarking: "These Poles here are very different from those of Posen."

He at once took severe measures to suppress the disorder, and spared no means to reassure the people and revive confidence. Berthier finally succeeded in bringing together a few of the notables, and producing a semblance of enthusiasm. The army corps, as they passed through the city, were welcomed with the usual flowers and decorations; but the ovation was forced, and far from spontaneous.

On the 30 June, Balachof was brought back to Vilna, and lodged in the house of the Prince de Neuchâtel, who told him to "consider himself at home." In default of other trophies, the Emperor proposed to represent the envoy, to his army and the populace, as a suppliant who had come to ask for peace even before the struggle had begun.

The following morning at ten o'clock the Emperor despatched one of his chamberlains to conduct Balachof to the palace. There, he was introduced to the room in which he had last seen the Czar, and which now served as cabinet to the Emperor of the French; nothing there was changed except the master. Napoleon was finishing his breakfast in the adjoining room; in a few minutes the door opened, and he entered quietly, with the pose of a conqueror, who feels himself well-established in his enemy's country, and who is perfectly at his ease. The Emperor ordered his coffee served in the cabinet, and the interview began.

To the salute of Balachof, he responded in a friendly manner. "I am well pleased, General, to make your acquaintance," he said. "I have heard favorable reports of you. I know that you are seriously attached to the Emperor Alexander, that you are one of his devoted friends. I wish to talk with you frankly, and I charge you to repeat faithfully my words to your sovereign."

After this preamble, his first words were: "I am very sorry that the Emperor Alexander is so badly advised." Then he asked, "Why this war?" Two great monarchs were pushing

their peoples to the carnage without the subject of their quarrel being clearly outlined. Balachof replied that his master did not desire the war, that he had done everything to avoid it: as conclusive evidence of this fact, he instanced the peace proposal of which he was the bearer. Then the conference gradually drifted into a recital of past grievances, in which each party laid the blame on the other, and was unwilling to admit any faults on his own side. Napoleon, whose anger at first was perhaps feigned, soon lost all control over himself, and his words became more and more violent and cutting. The Emperor Alexander, he said, prides himself upon his elevated sentiments; he wishes to be a chevalier upon the throne. Is it in conformity with this rule that he has surrounded himself with vile men, the shame and the disgrace of Europe? " I do not know Barclay de Tolly, but Bennigsen! " — " Bennigsen, who owed to his crimes a horrible celebrity: in examining the hands of this man one would find a stain of blood, and what blood! " Nothing could have been more offensive to Alexander than this allusion to the assassination of his father, Paul the First, which brought him to the throne.

The words of the Emperor, however, were not intended so much to offend Alexander as to inspire him with terror. During the past sixty years, the discontent of the higher classes in Russia had led to four changes in the rulers, and the assassination of three emperors. This was one of the reasons which had given Napoleon so much confidence in the success of his enterprise.

Then Napoleon went on to insinuate that, in Russia, the sovereigns were not so securely seated on their thrones that they could with impunity plunge their peoples into the calamity of a disastrous war and reduce them to despair. The men in whom Alexander reposed his confidence would be the first to turn against him, as soon as it was for their interest; to betray him and to sell him, " to draw the cord which would cut short his life." This was another allusion to the death of Paul, whose cries were stifled by a scarf around his neck, while his skull was broken by a blow from the hilt of a sword.

Next, the Emperor spoke of the overwhelming superiority of his resources of every kind, and demonstrated that his success was a mathematical certainty. He had 550,000 men, — yes, 550,000 well counted, — against 200,000 Russians. "Tell the Emperor Alexander that I assure him upon my word of honor that I have 550,000 men on this side of the Vistula."

At the end, Napoleon changed his tone, and once more became calm and amiable. He said that "he was neither against the negotiations nor against the peace." As for the proposition that he should abandon Vilna, and retire behind the Niemen with his armies, such conditions could not be meant seriously. If Alexander wished to resume negotiations, he had only to say the word, and Lauriston at once would take the road for Saint Petersburg. If the Czar desired at present to regulate the conditions of the combat, in such a manner as to safeguard the rights of humanity and of civilization; to arrange a cartel upon the most liberal bases; to assure the fate of the wounded and the prisoners, Napoleon was ready to carry on these negotiations parallel with the hostilities. He spoke of Alexander as of a wayward friend, for whom one preserved, at the bottom, after all, a feeling of sympathy, and whom one would like to see return. At last, he dismissed Balachof, with the statement that during the course of the day he would prepare a letter for the Emperor Alexander.

Napoleon felt that the apparent negotiations, undertaken by Alexander, were not sincere, and could have no favorable issue. If he accepted the conditions imposed by his adversary, and withdrew his armies behind the Niemen, he would destroy his prestige, encourage the Russians to assume the offensive, and all Europe to rise against him. Although every one around him remarked his "serious, preoccupied, sombre" air, which showed his disappointment over the opening of the campaign, he was as determined as ever to continue his operations. To Berthier, Caulaincourt, and Bessières, he remarked: "Alexander is trying to make a fool of me. Does he think that I have come to Vilna to negotiate treaties of commerce? We

must finish with the Colossus of the North, drive him back, place Poland between civilization and him. . . . Since Erfurt, Alexander has become too arrogant; the acquisition of Finland has turned his head. If he needs victories, let him fight the Persians, but let him cease to meddle with Europe; civilization repels these inhabitants of the North." [10]

The Emperor invited Balachof to dine with him at seven o'clock the same evening, the other guests being Berthier, Duroc, Bessières, and Caulaincourt. The latter was rather surprised at this mark of favor, as he had been treated with great coldness since the celebrated interview with Napoleon, at Saint-Cloud in June 1811, on his return from the Russian embassy. On that occasion, with an audacious frankness which was far from pleasing to the Emperor, Caulaincourt had pointed out the difficulties and dangers of an offensive campaign in Russia, and had predicted the failure of the enterprise.[11]

During the course of the dinner, the Emperor naturally dominated the conversation; his object evidently was to embarrass Balachof, and to humiliate not only the envoy, but all Russia in his person. In Balachof, however, Napoleon found an adversary worthy of his steel, and he was far from getting the better of this verbal duel.

Napoleon began by inquiring regarding the lady friends of Alexander, and the men to whom he extended his favors. Then he turned the subject to Moscow, as if it were a city which he expected soon to visit. In answer to his questions, Balachof said that Moscow had 300,000 inhabitants, 10,000 houses, and over 340 churches; that the explanation of the large number of places of worship was the fact that his people were devout.

"Bah!" said the Emperor, "no one is devout in our days."

"I beg your pardon, Sire," replied Balachof; "that is not the case everywhere. Perhaps they are no longer devout in Germany or in Italy, but they are in Spain and in Russia."

This *riposte,* for a moment, silenced the Emperor. Then he

[10] Cited 3 Vandal, 516.

[11] See *Napoleon and Marie-Louise,* 261–265.

again returned to the attack. Looking straight into the eyes of the envoy, he asked:

"What is the road to Moscow?"

"Sire, this question is calculated to embarrass me a little. Like the French, the Russians say that every road leads to Rome. One takes the road to Moscow *à volonté;* Charles the Twelfth took it by way of Pultava."

In suddenly recalling the name and the fate of the Swedish conqueror, Balachof almost disarmed his opponent.

On leaving the table, they went into the adjoining salon; there, Napoleon began to philosophize, deploring the blindness of princes and the folly of men. To him, Alexander owed the acquisitions of his reign: Finland, Moldavia, Wallachia, a morsel of Poland. If he had remained in the alliance, his reign would have been inscribed in letters of gold in the annals of his people. By placing himself at the head of his armies, he had laid himself open to the fury of his subjects in case of defeat. "War," he said, "is my natural element. I am used to it. It is not the same thing with him. He is an emperor by birth. He should reign, and name a general to command, rewarding him if he succeeds, punishing him if he fails."

He continued for some time in this tone of monologue. Then he vented his spleen on Caulaincourt, who had remained grave and silent, giving no signs of approval. Tapping him lightly on the cheek, he said: "Well! why do you say nothing, old courtier of the Court of Saint Petersburg?" Then he added, in a louder voice: "Ah! the Emperor Alexander treats ambassadors well: he thinks to conduct political affairs with cajoleries. He has made a Russian of you!" [12]

On many occasions during the past year, Caulaincourt had submitted to this reproach in silence; but this time, in the presence of an enemy, it was more than he could bear: it was putting in doubt his French sentiments and his loyalty. Losing all self-restraint, Caulaincourt replied in a tone which the Emperor was not accustomed to hear: "It is doubtless because my frankness has too well proved to Your Majesty that I am a very

[12] Cited 3 Vandal, 527.

good Frenchman that you wish to have the air of doubting it. The marks of kindness of the Emperor Alexander were intended for Your Majesty; as your faithful subject, Sire, I shall never forget them."

The expression of Caulaincourt showed that he was wounded to the heart, and Napoleon was much embarrassed. He changed the conversation, and soon dismissed Balachof with some friendly words, after telling Berthier to deliver to the envoy his reply to Alexander's letter. Addressing the Prince de Neuchâtel familiarly by his first name, he said: "Alexandre, you may give the letter to the General: it is not a secret." In fact, his response to the demand, that he should recross the river, was a résumé of his bellicose address to his troops prior to passing the Niemen.

After the departure of Balachof, the Emperor tried to make some amends to Caulaincourt, but his words were hardly calculated to heal the wound he had given to his faithful friend. "You are no doubt saddened," he said, "because of the injury I am going to do your friend." Then, as usual, mingling facts with fiction, he went on to say that the Russian alliance was only a snare; that the invasion was forced upon him; that it was the most useful and the most politic of his enterprises, and would necessarily bring about the general peace.

But Caulaincourt no longer listened to his words. Completely overcome by his feelings, he solicited permission to retire from headquarters, and serve in Spain, or elsewhere, far from the presence of His Majesty. In this crisis, Napoleon remained very calm, and showed the kind side of his character. Instead of imposing silence on his aide de camp, he said: "But what is the matter with you? Who doubts your fidelity? I well know that you are a trustworthy man. I was only joking. You are much too sensitive. You know well that I esteem you. At this moment you are out of your head: I shall not reply to what you say."

Napoleon then put an end to the scene by leaving the room, and shutting himself up in his cabinet. Caulaincourt wished to follow, and was restrained, almost by force, by Duroc and

Berthier. It was some time before they could persuade the exasperated man to forget his grievances, and consent to retain his position on the staff.[13]

Thus ended the final negotiations between the allies of Tilsit and Erfurt. Drawn farther and farther into the depths of this vast and mysterious Empire, Napoleon declared: "I will sign peace in Moscow!"

[13] The story of the scene between Napoleon and Caulaincourt is based upon the *Souvenirs inédits* of the Duc de Vicence, which were communicated first to Thiers, and later to Vandal. These authors, particularly the latter, made extensive use of this material, in which they placed absolute confidence. Masson, however, seems to consider these unpublished recollections of Caulaincourt as absolutely unreliable. (See 7 Masson, 332, note; see also *Napoleon and Marie-Louise,* 266.)

CHAPTER FORTY-TWO

MARCH — AUGUST 1812

THE ROLE OF JEROME

Jérôme's Preparations for the Campaign — His Trip to Paris — Chosen to Command the Right Wing — Considered for the Throne of Poland — The Other Candidates — Jérôme Proceeds to Warsaw — His Life There — His Rôle in the Campaign — The Opposing Forces — Napoleon's Strategy — His Plans Wrecked by Jérôme — Vandamme Relieved of His Command — The Right Wing Placed under Davout — Jérôme Decides to Go Home — He Returns to Warsaw — Departs for Cassel

DURING the winter of 1812, Westphalia was one vast camp: all the soldiers on their way to join the Grand Army in Poland passed through the kingdom. The subsistence of these troops was a great drain on Jérôme, for if the Major-General persisted in sending the men, the Minister of the Treasury, in spite of the Emperor's promises, persisted in sending no money.

But Jérôme made no protests: his head was full of his preparations for the campaign, the victories he was going to win, the crown he expected to receive. At his Court, civil dress suddenly disappeared, and every one appeared in uniform; saddle and carriage horses were assembled for the campaign; reviews were held. To this young man who had made the campaign of 1809 with so much luxury, the Emperor set a very bad example. In one of her letters, Catherine speaks of thirty-five saddle-horses, and four hundred domestics, of the Emperor, who had passed through Cassel. Napoleon himself had declared: "If they think that I am going to make war as formerly, they are mistaken. I wish my headquarters to be like Paris." It was also reported that Berthier alone would have thirty fourgons.

The Westphalian troops were ordered to march on the 15 March. Jérôme would cross the Elbe with 14,400 infantry, and 2800 cavalry, which, with his division of 3460 men at Dantzic, would make an army corps of over 20,000 troops. Under date of 25 February, he wrote the Emperor: "If, as Your Majesty has led me to hope, I have a French corps of twenty to twenty-five thousand men, I think that I shall be able to convince you that I am worthy of belonging to you." Of his own accord, he demanded Vandamme to command his army; and that general willingly accepted the assignment, notwithstanding his disagreeable recollections of the campaign with Jérôme in Silesia three years before. The Emperor took great interest in the organization of the Westphalian army, selecting Marchand as chief-of-staff, and Tharreau as division commander. Jérôme raised no objections, and was satisfied with all the arrangements. When, on the 8 March, he received the Emperor's invitation to come to Paris, "incognito and with very few persons," he was almost delirious with joy.

He immediately set out, taking with him only four members of his household and five domestics. On his arrival, on the 13th, he was lodged with his suite in the Pavillon de Flore at the Tuileries. He had never been received with so much distinction, even at the time of his marriage in 1807. At his first interview with the Emperor, he received the great news that he was to command the entire right wing of the army, a total of over 70,000 men.

It is obvious that this command was given Jérôme for political rather than military reasons. The Emperor had resolved, after the conquest of Russia, to reëstablish the ancient kingdom of Poland, so far as he could do so without including the provinces ceded to Austria; and to place on the throne his favorite brother — the only one who had proved obedient to his orders on all occasions.

In selecting his brother for this honor, the Emperor was forced to disregard the aspirations of several other persons, who felt that they had claims to the crown. These candidates

were: the King of Saxony, Prince Poniatowski, Murat, Eugène, and Davout.

Of these five princes, the King of Saxony had the strongest claims. Under an article of the Treaty of Tilsit, he had been given the sovereignty of the Polish provinces ceded to Prussia in the different partitions, with the title of Grand-Duke of Warsaw. By the Treaty of Vienna, he had been confirmed in his possessions, and had acquired other parcels of territory. He was the traditional sovereign, designated by the Emperor, recognized by Europe; and, since 1807, he had been a faithful ally and valuable auxiliary of France.

If the Poles themselves had been consulted, Poniatowski would certainly have been their choice. He was the only aspirant who was a native of the country; and, since 1807, he had organized an army, at the head of which he had gained much glory in the campaign of 1809.

Murat had never been the candidate of any one but himself. Nevertheless, since the campaign of 1807, he had not ceased to dream of mounting one day the throne of Poland.

Eugène was, so to speak, a candidate in spite of himself. His position is well expressed in a letter written his wife from Paris in the spring of 1812. "They say here," he stated, "that the King of Westphalia is very likely to become King of Poland. I particularly cite this news to you, because you know how much I shall be enchanted that there is nothing in it which concerns us; and because I pray Heaven, which has so well placed us, to leave us there the remainder of our lives."

Finally, there was Davout, who, having commanded in chief at Warsaw, with almost sovereign power, felt that he should actually reign there, with as much right as Bernadotte at Stockholm, or Murat at Naples, and with much more justice than Jérôme at Cassel.

In the meantime, the Emperor kept his own counsels, and appeared to pay no attention to these rivalries. On the 16 March, he wrote Berthier: "It is necessary that it be unknown until the last moment that the King of Westphalia will com-

mand my right"; but the news was soon known by everybody in Paris.

Every wish of Jérôme's was gratified: Lecamus and Meyronnet were made comtes of the Empire, and five other members of the "joyous band" became barons. The Emperor had his brother constantly by his side, and treated him like a son. Leaving Paris on the 21 March, Jérôme made only a short stop at Cassel; and the 5 April he was on his way to Glogau, ready to enter on the campaign.

Like the Emperor, Jérôme proposed to be as comfortable as if he were at Paris. He had no less than seven fourgons to contain his personal effects; and a complete list of his uniforms and other personal articles would fill a whole page of this volume.[1]

After a brief tour of inspection to Cracow, under orders from the Emperor, Jérôme arrived at Warsaw early in May, and made his quarters in the Brühl Palace. Here, he surrounded himself with an etiquette as severe as that in his palace at Cassel. At Warsaw, "in a country where the beauty of the women is neither rare nor exclusive," he found so many charmers that he sent back to Cassel a young German beauty whom he had invited to console him during the campaign.

To occupy the hours which were not more agreeably employed, Jérôme sent for M. de Pradt, the Archbishop of Malines, who was at Warsaw as ambassador of the Emperor, and talked to him for hours at a time, while he promenaded up and down his cabinet, in true Napoleonic fashion. According to the ambassador, he displayed great enthusiasm for the Emperor, much attachment for his wife and family, an ardent ambition to have the throne of Poland. Speaking one day of the King of Saxony, he declared: "This poor King! He thinks that *that* is for him!" The ambassador says further: "With a little more legitimacy, and a little less puerile vanity, Jérôme would have passed for a distinguished prince"; but his self-conceit spoiled everything.

His performances, when reported to the Emperor at Dresden,

[1] See 7 Masson, 295–296.

called forth a first reprimand. "Before giving him a command," said Napoleon, "I told him that if he proposed to go to the army as a king, he had better stay at home. Why then did he go?" This was the message which he charged Catherine to send her husband.

As soon as the Emperor reached Posen, he sent his brother instructions from day to day; but nearly all were couched in the form of requests, rather than of orders. "I desire," he said, "that you should make this and that reconnaissance." But Jérôme remained at Warsaw, and issued his orders from there.

At last the agreeable sojourn at Warsaw came to an end. On the 5 June, the Emperor issued his orders: Jérôme, with his entire army, was to advance to the east toward Grodno; Reynier, bearing a little to the south, would ascend the Bug to extend a hand to the Austrians; if Bagration tried to descend the right bank of the Niemen, from Grodno to Kovno, Jérôme would follow along the left bank, and get in contact with Prince Eugène; and so on. Nearly every contingency was provided for; but, as the Emperor said in his letter of the 11 June, they were "so far apart that it was necessary for him to manœuvre according to the circumstances, in the general spirit of his instructions."

In order to understand clearly the rôle of Jérôme in the campaign, a brief military digression is necessary.

The force with which the Emperor crossed the Niemen the last of June was composed of the three corps of Davout, Oudinot, and Ney, the Guard, and the Reserve Cavalry, a total of about 250,000 men, mostly French.

The next group, which was originally concentrated on the Vistula, below Warsaw, consisted of the Italian corps of Eugène, about 45,000 strong, and the far smaller corps of Saint-Cyr, some 25,000 men, mostly Bavarians.

To the south, upon the upper Vistula, were the Fifth Corps, 35,000 Poles under Poniatowski; the Eighth Corps, 20,000 Westphalians under Vandamme; and the Seventh Corps, 15,000 Saxons under Reynier: the whole body under the separate

command of the incompetent Jérôme. The Poles, who made up about half of the right wing, were the best of all the auxiliary troops of Napoleon, even superior to the Italians. Moreover, they were fighting against the hated Russians, for the independence of their beloved country.

A glance at the map will show that Napoleon's front line was like a great crescent moon, over 200 miles in length, and so disposed that it was impossible for the enemy to tell at what point he intended to strike. He could march with equal rapidity upon Kovno or Grodno, or upon Kiev, if he chose a southerly course; but the latter direction was unlikely, as it would not lead to either capital, Saint Petersburg or Moscow.

The vastness of Rússia, opening out funnel-like from the Polish frontier, gave the defenders, with their inferior forces, a much wider arc to watch, some 300 miles in length. But their task was much simplified by the great marshes of the Pripet, which could not be traversed at any point. Endless forests and almost equally endless ponds make this one of the most extraordinary districts in Europe. This obstacle dominated the strategy of the Germans in the Great War, as it also dictated the line both of Napoleon's attack and of the Russian defence, in this campaign.

It was therefore unnecessary for the Russians to watch their entire line, and their forces were divided into two armies, one above and the other below the marshes. By far the larger army, about 130,000 men under Barclay, was concentrated near Vilna, on the direct road to Moscow; the second army, more than 60,000 strong, under Bagration, was in the vicinity of Lutsk, to the south of the marshy land and barring the Kiev road.

It is thus apparent that, while the existence of the marshes just south of the middle of their frontier saved the Russians the necessity of guarding the long line of 300 miles, on the other hand, it required them to divide their forces.

When the left wing of Napoleon's army advanced, early in June, from the lower Vistula to the Niemen, the centre and right to the south at first remained stationary. To meet the

intentions of the invader, as soon as they were fully declared, Bagration later moved to the north of the marshes, where he stood with about 50,000 men of his orignal command. At the same time, a third army, of about 40,000, was formed in the neighborhood of Lutsk.

As Napoleon's advance proceeded, his strategy became apparent: the whole Grand Army was swinging eastward around a pivot on the upper Vistula. The left wing moved directly to Vilna; the centre, under Eugène, marched to positions a little to the south and rear. Next, the right under Jérôme was moved forward: Poniatowski nearly to the Russian frontier; Vandamme somewhat less; and Reynier but a very little beyond the Vistula.

The objects to be achieved by these movements are sufficiently clear. The main body, under the Emperor, was to strike in between Barclay and Bagration, to separate these two armies, and deal with them in detail. The five corps to the south, under Eugène and Jérôme, were assigned the task of "holding" Bagration until the main advance should have cut him off from his colleague. Had this plan been carried out as Napoleon intended, it would probably have decided the campaign; but it failed through the incompetence of Jérôme, whom the Emperor never should have entrusted with so important a command.

"But," some one may ask, "why could not Bagration at once effect his junction with Barclay as soon as he knew that the French had crossed at Kovno in large force? Where then was the value of Napoleon's plan; and how was Jérôme so much at fault?"

The answer is, that Bagration did not *know* all these facts. Searching for information at the point of the bayonet, and looking for it on the shelves of a library, are two very different propositions. "If we knew the exact disposition of our enemy's forces," said old Frederick the Great, "we should beat him every time."

"Bagration had not before him, as the reader has, a simple sketch of his enemy's operations. He would know, indeed,

that a great force was attacking Kovno, and threatening the gap between himself and Barclay; but he would also know that other very large masses (the army under Jérôme) lay just in front of *him* to the west; and he would be more accurately aware of their strength and menace than he could be of the strength and menace of those before Kovno. Did he immediately retreat from before Jérôme, and make at once for a junction with Barclay to the north, he would be inviting the whole of a vastly superior force to fall upon both armies combined. To do that would have been madness." [2]

Bagration's obvious course, therefore, was to stand pat until the enemy's plans were more fully developed. Now, that Bagration should do this was Napoleon's whole object. He expected his brother to hold the Russian second army until he himself had time to come down on Bagration's right flank with a portion of the troops that had crossed at Kovno.

But Jérôme failed to press his frontal attack as it should have been pressed; and it did not take Bagration long to divine that he had not the Emperor in person before him, but some incompetent subordinate, with only a small part of the French forces. He therefore moved rapidly to the north of the marshes, with the bulk of his command, leaving behind, in front of Jérôme, only two or three of his divisions, to form the nucleus of a new third army. Thus Napoleon's plan failed in its very first stages.

Before leaving Warsaw, Jérôme took some measures which afford much food for thought: he left in the Brühl Palace his archives and many of his personal effects, under the guard of some of his Westphalian troops. This would seem to indicate that he expected to return at an early date. Whether he was already tired of the war, or disappointed at his cold reception by the Poles, he appears to have given up his hopes of the crown; for he wrote Catherine that "neither he, nor the Emperor, thought of it," and that Westphalia could count upon him.

[2] Belloc, *Napoleon's Campaign of 1812*, 33.

In his letters of the 21 and 22 June, the Emperor enjoined Jérôme imperatively to be at Grodno by the 25th or the 26th; "from that place," he wrote, "I desire that the King shall take up the pursuit of the enemy with the greatest activity. I am having some divisions march to encounter General Bagration, who, I suppose, has taken the route to Minsk." But, although the enemy evacuated Grodno on the 29th, Jérôme did not enter until the following day; and then he stopped there for six days.

At Grodno, Vandamme wrote the King to complain of the terrible disorder which reigned among the troops, and asked to be relieved of his command. Jérôme ordered him to return to Warsaw, to await the commands of the Emperor, and placed Tharreau in charge of his corps.

On the 4 July, the Emperor wrote Jérôme: "I have received your courier who left Grodno at four o'clock this afternoon. His arrival was very agreeable to me, as I hoped that you had sent news of the corps of Bagration. . . . What was my astonishment to learn that the major-general has received nothing from you except a complaint against a general! I can only express my dissatisfaction over the small information you give me. . . ." Then he adds with his own hand: "You are compromising all the success of the campaign on the right. It is impossible thus to make war." In another letter, written through Berthier on the 5th, Napoleon says: "Tell him that it is impossible to manœuvre worse than he has done; . . . that, by his disregard of rules and instructions, he has given Bagration all the time necessary to make his escape at his ease." Then he adds: "You will say to him that all the fruits of my manœuvres, and the finest occasion presented in the war, have been lost by this remarkable disregard of the primary notions of war."

Realizing at last that, if he left Jérôme in command, he would lose not only the first operations, but the entire campaign, on the 6 July the Emperor practically placed the whole right wing under the command of Davout; but, to save the face of his brother, he directed that this order should be kept

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secret, except in case of the reunion of the right and left wings, or "if the good of the service demands it."

No matter what Napoleon might have said before leaving Paris, he was as earnest in this campaign as in any other. To the war, he gave all that was best in him: his genius, his activity, his sleep, his repasts, his health. As soon as he was in the field, he was once more a soldier: he spoke, he acted, he lived as a soldier. He had no patience with a carpet-knight like his brother Jérôme.

In still another letter, on the 8 July, the Emperor severely called Jérôme to account for the amateurish manner in which he was conducting his campaign. He said, in conclusion: "Act vigorously and quickly, and do not blush to ask advice regarding matters you do not understand. Raise yourself to the height of the success and well-being of the army, and stifle all the little secondary considerations."

This exhortation did not heal the wound to Jérôme's vanity: he decided to throw up his command and return home, making an excuse of a threat by England to descend upon his kingdom. He was tired of the war, irritated at the continual reproaches of the Emperor, disgusted at the kingdom "which was at the end of the world," of which he had not even been offered the crown. The Emperor made no effort to keep him: on the 10 July, he wrote, in reply to Jérôme's letter of the 9th, that his brother had only to leave — he put no obstacles in the way of his departure.

On the 14 July, Jérôme received a despatch from Davout, enclosing a copy of the letter from Berthier which authorized him to assume command of the right wing. In view of Jérôme's strained relations with the Prince d'Eckmühl, this was another blow to his vanity. Nevertheless, he wrote the Emperor a very submissive letter, in which he again demanded permission to retire. Two days later, with all his Guard, he began his retrograde march to Warsaw, where he arrived the last of July. Here he received a letter from the Emperor, dated the 31st,

in which, according to Jérôme's letter to his wife, Napoleon gave him permission to return home because "his health could not stand the climate." [3]

Jérôme's second sojourn at Warsaw was much less agreeable than the first. Seeing his disgrace, the Poles treated him with open disdain. He was ordered by the Emperor to leave behind him his Guard, who were combat-troops, and to take as his escort his body-guard, who were only parade-soldiers. The first week in August, he set out for Cassel.

[3] As this letter cannot be found in any of the Archives, we know of its tenor only from Jérôme's letter to Catherine.

CHAPTER FORTY-THREE

JUNE — OCTOBER 1812

THE MYSTERIOUS MALADY

Napoleon's Strong Constitution — His Health during the Russian Campaign — The "Mysterious Malady" — Views of Lord Wolseley — Conflicting Testimony of Eye-Witnesses — Statements of Larrey, Rapp, and Gourgaud — Assertions of Ségur — Bulletins of Dr. Mestivier — Notes of Dr. Yvan — Napoleon at Borodino — He Loses His Voice after the Battle — Difficulty of Deciphering His Written Orders — Clearness of His Mind — Pessimistic Notes of Ségur — Humorous Remarks of Tolstoy — The Result of the Battle Not Due to Napoleon's Health

IN HIS bulletins, and in his correspondence, even in his private letters to Joséphine, Napoleon always endeavored to convey the impression that he was constantly in good health. During his early life, this was practically true: he had inherited a sound and tough body, capable of standing great fatigues, and of remarkable nervous strength. He never spent more than twenty minutes at his meals, and needed only four hours of sleep a day. He was able to fall asleep at will, and awaken with his mind instantly alert. Working sixteen to twenty hours a day, he wore out his secretaries with their labors. His published correspondence fills thirty-two large volumes, although not more than a third of his letters have been printed. He said of himself: "Different matters are stored away in my brain as in a chest of drawers. When I wish to interrupt a piece of work, I close that drawer and open another. None of them ever gets mixed, never does this inconvenience or fatigue me. When I am ready, I shut all the drawers and go to sleep." He was moderate in all his habits, and, although never entirely chaste, he was in no sense a profligate.

But, after the age of forty, he began to show signs of lessened activity, due partly to a greater love of ease, and partly to failing physical strength. He had drawn too great drafts on his

bank of reserve; and, after his marriage to Marie-Louise, he undoubtedly indulged in physical excesses. The most abstemious of young officers had become in 1812 the ruler of a Court almost Oriental in its luxury; and had already, at the age of forty-three, impaired his general health by indulgence in its dissipations.

"Even those who hate his memory," says Lord Wolseley, "will admit that his brain was almost superhuman in its grasp of subjects that interested him. Probably no other man has ever dealt so energetically for an equal number of years, and with such direct responsibility, with so great a variety of involved and complicated public questions of the first magnitude. But, during this process, his clear, nimble brain had suffered from exhausting anxieties and the unceasing work they entailed. His splendid constitution gradually yielded to the frequent exposures and constant fatigues, by night and day, which the peculiar nature of his position imposed upon him."[1]

During the first campaign in Italy, Napoleon said: "Good health is indispensable in war, and nothing can take its place." In his later campaigns, he had occasion to prove the truth of this axiom under many circumstances where, owing to ill-health, his qualities shone with dimmed brilliancy. Without exaggerating the importance of this factor, it is certain that it exercised in the Russian campaign a very pronounced influence; so that atmospheric conditions, or unforeseen events, defeated some of the finest combinations ever conceived by the human intelligence.

The campaign of 1812, which some consider an admirably planned enterprise, and others an adventure of incredible audacity, is an occasion when Fate seems to have played the decisive rôle.

Critics, whose competence is generally acknowledged, have displayed unreserved admiration for the campaigns of 1796 and 1814; but, on the other hand, they have pointed out, as

[1] Wolseley, *The Decline and Fall of Napoleon*, 2. These papers, first published in the *Pall Mall Magazine*, and subsequently (1895) in book form, will be frequently cited in the following pages.

early as 1809, many strategic errors on the part of Napoleon, "a relaxation of the springs," some "evidences of feebleness." [2] According to them, at Wagram the Emperor did not take advantage of his victory; while, in Russia, he was much below his usual form. It is impossible, however, to assert positively that these eclipses of his military genius, pointed out by his adversaries, as well as generally admitted by his admirers, were due entirely to his physical condition.

Lord Wolseley speaks of "overwhelming attacks" of a "mysterious malady," to which the Emperor was subject, and which, "at the most critical period of a battle," hindered the successful execution of his well-conceived plans.[3] This strange indisposition has been compared to "a sudden attack of lethargy, or physical and moral prostration, sometimes accompanied by acute bodily pain. Its effects, as known to lookers-on, were, that at some critical moment of a battle his wonderful power of quick and correct decision seemed to desert him: so much so that for the time being he almost abandoned the reins to chance." [4]

As above stated, Lord Wolseley was the first to call attention specially to this question, in a work which excited much attention when it was published some thirty years ago. Here is a brief résumé of his argument: [5]

Up to the year 1812, Napoleon had been almost invariably fortunate, and, except for some temporary reverses, had known only success; but the campaign of Russia, undertaken that year, was an "appalling failure."

Napoleon himself attributed his change of fortune to Fate: "In this war," he said, "it was only pure accidents which saved that Empire."

No doubt, the word Fate is a convenient term to explain — the *inexplicable;* no doubt, when we cannot easily succeed in

[2] Yorck von Wartenburg, *Napoleon als Feldherr,* cited by Henry Houssaye, *1815,* 486, note.

[3] Wolseley, *Op. cit.,* 28.

[4] *Ibid.,* 1–2.

[5] The passages in quotation marks are cited from Wolseley's book.

establishing human responsibility, we find in it an excuse for our impotency. Nevertheless, it is only fair to endeavor to ascertain what part it played in this campaign.

It is true that, on invading Lithuania, the troops were decimated by enteric diseases, which carried the men off by the thousand; that a cold torrential rain set in, and continued to fall for days, turning the wretched dirt-roads of the country into almost impassable morasses. "Even before reaching Vilna, the lack of horses had forced the Emperor to leave behind one hundred cannon and five hundred fourgons."

But, at the opening of the campaign, why those hesitations, those losses of time? In the case of a man habituated to prompt decisions, how can we explain those long halts at Vilna and Vitepsk (thirty-four days in all), except on the ground of a failure of will-power, due to physical and moral fatigue? Was his condition, as has been said, the result of "incessant labor," and of "overwhelming cares"?

In searching for the answer to these questions, we find in the testimony of the eye-witnesses many discrepancies in the evidence. Those who were nearest to the Emperor are in accord in stating that, during this unfortunate expedition, Napoleon showed himself as active, and as genial, as during other campaigns; but their affirmations are accompanied by some reservations. "The Emperor occupied himself with everything, looked after everything," records the surgeon Larrey. But in another place Larrey states that, "he who, in Egypt, endured with gaiety the long marches across the desert under a tropical heat; who allowed his carriage to roll empty over the sand, at the disposal of Berthollet and Monge, without ever entering it; and he who, in Spain, astonished even the Spaniards by his endurance of fatigue, and the incredible rapidity of his changes of place, complained now of the elevation of the temperature, lived willingly in his carriage, and passed long hours undressed upon a bed of rest." [6]

Those of his generals who remained faithful to his memory refuse to admit that he weakened for a moment in his super-

[6] Paul Triaire, *Dominique Larrey*, 523–524.

human task. "The activity of the Emperor," writes one of them, "was really inconceivable: the movements, the administration, the measures of safety, of prevision, he embraced all and was capable of all." [7]

General Gourgaud, one of his aides de camp, is even more affirmative in his statements: "The perfect health of the Emperor at this period has never been put in doubt a single moment. Aside from the time he gave to affairs, he found leisure to hunt for four or five hours, to hold reviews, and so forth. . . . Napoleon showed during the Campaign of Russia as much superiority and activity as he displayed later in the campaigns of 1813 and 1814."

And, taking to task those who had expressed opinions different from his own, Gourgaud continues: "At Vilna, at Vitepsk, Napoleon is depicted to us as a being deprived of energy, of will, even of reason; not knowing what to do, what to become; giving no orders, and seeming to leave everything to chance. Nevertheless, we see him anticipate everything, direct at the same time affairs of State and of war; we see him, from the first, entirely overthrow the Russian plan of campaign, cut their army in two; force them to abandon their lines of operation, their magazines, their entrenched camps, their communications; and to yield to us without battles, so to speak, all of Lithuania. At Vitepsk, at the moment that M. de Ségur represents the Emperor to us as in a profound torpor, the Russian generals, who had united, advance to attack us — exactly what he had desired. They think that it is his design to turn their right, and manœuvre accordingly; but, with the rapidity of lightning, he passes the Dnieper and falls upon their left flank." [8]

The statements of Ségur, which Gourgaud combats so vigorously, deserve to be considered at some length. Writing of the Russian Campaign, M. de Ségur says: "A vigorous con-

[7] Rapp, *Mémoires*, 117, cited by Triaire.

[8] Gourgaud, *Examen critique de l'ouvrage de M. le comte Ph. de Ségur*, "Napoléon et la Grande Armée en Russie," Chap. I, Livre I, and Chap. X, Livre VI, 188–189.

stitution no longer supported as formerly this vast genius." From the time of the Campaign of Italy, Napoleon had acquired the habit of taking hot baths, "as an indispensable remedy against a malady of a grave nature, which it was his policy to hide carefully." Comte de Ségur continues: "Since the eve of the battle of the Moskowa, Napoleon had been suffering from an attack of *dysuria,* which he was unable to overcome until the second day after his arrival at the Kremlin, in Moscow. Through his secretary, I was aware of this fact when I was writing on the campaign of 1812. His surgeon and my father had also informed me that he was subject quite frequently to this malady from his youth. The detailed proofs of this fact, authentic and indisputable, will be found in the course of these memoirs, as well as in the attestations written in their own hands by Messieurs Yvan and Mestivier, the former, Napoleon's surgeon since 1796, the latter, his physician in 1812, who was in attendance upon him the eve of Moskowa, as also upon his arrival at the Kremlin."

It is true, as stated by Ségur,[9] that Dr. Yvan has narrated that, having occasion, in 1796 and 1797, to treat Napoleon for this malady, of which he already complained, he had succeeded most frequently in relieving these attacks only by immersing him, in default of a bathtub, in the first hogshead obtainable. He suffered apparently from a local inflammation, for which the baths gave him a notable relief.[10]

"The rapid evolution of this malady," remarks Dr. Cabanès, "his cure by so mild a treatment, evidently indicate a non-specific inflammation of the bladder (*cystite*), or of the ureter (*uréthrite*)."[11]

It has been suggested, and quite plausibly, that there was an irritation of the bladder or ureter, which was "not virulent,

[9] Ségur, 1 *Mémoires,* 281.

[10] Dr. Héreau, former surgeon of Marie-Louise, and first surgeon of Madame Mère, speaks of this "infirmity" of the Emperor in his book, *Napoléon à Sainte-Hélène.* In this same connection, Gourgaud relates a very curious episode, of the earlier days of the Empire, which is of too intimate a character to be narrated here. (See Gourgaud, 2 *Journal,* 159–160.)

[11] Cabanès, *Au chevet de l'Empereur,* 192.

and perhaps traumatic." Dr. Maljean, principal medical officer of the French Army, writes: "Napoleon suffered his whole life long from very painful attacks of dysuria. He was certainly subject to gravel: his autopsy revealed some grains and small stones in the bladder." [12]

From all the evidence, there can be no doubt that Napoleon suffered from a severe attack of this malady at Borodino (Moskowa).[13]

There is on file in the National Archives of France [14] a number of papers, used by M. de Ségur in writing his work, and subsequently deposited by him in this dépôt. Among these documents, perhaps the most interesting is "the certified copy of two bulletins upon the health of Napoleon," drawn up by Dr. Mestivier. This physician, a native of France, had returned home from Moscow, where he had been living, at the time of the opening of the campaign. Corvisart, hearing of his arrival at Paris, persuaded the Emperor to take him as private medical attendant during the expedition. Napoleon first consulted him at Vitepsk, regarding the dysentery, then prevalent in the army, which had made considerable ravages; and he again called upon him when he fell ill on the eve of his entrance into the capital of the Russian Empire.

On the 5 September 1812, two days before the battle of Borodino, the Emperor sent for Dr. Mestivier. "Well, Doctor," he said, "you see that I am growing old; my legs are swollen, and I am suffering from dysuria. No doubt it is due to the humidity of these bivouacs, for I live only by the skin."

The following day, during the night of the 6th to the 7th, the Emperor was very ill. As shown by the bulletin, he had a continuous dry cough; his respiration was difficult and interrupted; his extremities were much swollen; his pulse was feeble and intermittent. All of these grave symptoms gave just grounds for fearing a hydropsy of the chest.

[12] Maljean, *Chronique médicale*, 15 février 1911, page 118.

[13] See *Mémoires de Griois*, cited by Gourgaud, 227–238, 253–254, and 418; 3 *Mémoires de Dumas*, 439–440; 2 *Mémoires de Pasquier*, 8–10; Chuquet, 1 *Episodes et portraits*, 199.

[14] Archives nationales, *A B*, XIX, 179.

The version of Ségur is only slightly different: "The pulse short, feverish, and irregular. These grave symptoms caused a fear of a disposition to an organic malady."

To throw further light on the diagnosis, we give below the text of the supplementary document preserved in the National Archives. Comte de Ségur put on file this copy, sent him the 26 January 1825 by Dr. Mestivier, just as he "found it again among his papers."

This attestation, being a continuation of the one above quoted, reads as follows:

I should add that the dysuria which Napoleon experienced did not cease entirely until the second day after his entrance into Moscow. That day he called me to him about seven o'clock in the morning, just after I awoke . . . He said to me that he thought the attack was over . . . ; but he displayed some uneasiness over the quantity of sediment. I told him that this was the result of a crisis favorable to the early recovery of his health.

Then he asked me his usual question: "What is the news?" (His bed was so placed that he could not see the city.) I answered him that the Kremlin was surrounded by a circle of fire. "Ah bah!" replied Napoleon, "it is doubtless the result of the imprudence of some soldiers who have wished to make bread, or who have placed their bivouacs too near the wooden houses."

Then, fixing his eyes on the ceiling, he remained silent for several minutes. Suddenly, his face, kindly up to that moment, assumed a terrible expression. Calling his valets de chambre, Constant and Roustam, he leaped out of bed, and began to shave. Without uttering a word, he had himself dressed promptly, and with movements of ill-humor; when the Mameluke [Roustam], by mistake, offered him the left boot, instead of the right, Napoleon pushed him back with his foot, and overthrew him.

As he did not make the usual sign of his head, by which he dismissed me, I remained there nearly an hour. Then, several persons entered, and Napoleon passed into another room.

The document is signed: MESTIVIER, Member of the Royal Academy of Medicine.

To these testimonies we add another, which is more trustworthy as it comes from a person of the highest authority.

Dr. Yvan had served five years with distinction in the Army of Italy, originally as surgeon of the first class, and later as surgeon-in-chief. Bonaparte attached him to his general staff, and subsequently he followed Napoleon in his campaigns. He therefore had known Napoleon for many years; and he was so intimately received that he was almost the only person outside the family to sign the marriage contract of Caroline and Murat. Before visiting a watering-place, Joséphine always asked his advice. After every battle, it was his duty to report to the Emperor regarding the losses sustained, the numbers of the wounded, the installation of the ambulances, and the gravity of the wounds of the chief officers. To all this, Napoleon attached great importance.[15]

When the Emperor was wounded at Ratisbon, it was Yvan who gave him first-aid treatment. In everything pertaining to his jurisdiction, Napoleon had full confidence in his first-surgeon; as, in the domain of medicine, he had faith only in his personal physician. But Yvan had this advantage over Corvisart, that he accompanied his illustrious patient upon all the fields of battle, and did not leave him a moment during his expeditions to the four corners of Europe. But, in 1811, on the death of the head-doctor of the Invalides, this post had been given to Yvan, as the oldest and most meritorious surgeon of the Army.

The two notes, upon the state of Napoleon's health in 1812, which were prepared by Dr. Yvan, and which confirm those of Dr. Mestivier, are given in full below: —

I

The Emperor was very susceptible to atmospheric changes. In his case it was necessary, in order to maintain his equilibrium, that the skin should fulfill its functions. As soon as his pores were contracted, from either a moral or an atmospheric

[15] See Dr. P. Bonnette, *La santé de l'Empereur, sa maison médicale en campagne* (ÆSCULAPE).

cause, the appearance of irritation was manifested, with a result more or less serious; and the cough or ischuria became pronounced. All these manifestations ceased with the reëstablishment of the functions of the skin.

During the day of the 5th to the 6th [September 1812] he was tormented by the equinoctial winds, the fogs, the rain, and the bivouac. These conditions were so grave that it was vital to give him relief by sending for a draught, which it was necessary to obtain during the night at a league from the field of battle; the trouble was severe enough to cause a fever; and it was only after several days of repose, at Mojaïsk or Moscow, that the cough and the ischuria ceased.

II

The constitution of the Emperor was highly nervous. He was very susceptible to moral influences, and the spasm was ordinarily divided between the stomach and the bladder. When the irritation affected the stomach, he had a nervous cough which exhausted his moral and physical forces, to such an extent that his mind was not the same. The bladder ordinarily shared the spasm, and he then found himself under an influence both painful and fatiguing. Riding increased his sufferings. He experienced the *ensemble* of these accidents at the moment of the battle of Mojaïsk (Moskowa or Borodino), to such a degree that they were obliged, during the night of the 6th to the 7th, to send for a potion, which was prepared by his pharmacist, who was with the heavy baggage-train an hour away.

These two notes of Yvan may have been written in the very presence of Comte de Ségur, to whom they were given by the surgeon.

In the notes of Yvan, which we have just cited, allusion is made to a nervous cough, which had complicated the strangury from which the Emperor had suffered for several days previous. The indisposition of Napoleon began on the 7th: he suffered that day, writes Baron Denniée,[16] who accompanied him, from a "terrible sick-headache." Nevertheless, he mounted his

[16] Denniée, *Itinéraire de Napoléon pendant la guerre de 1812*, 74.

horse before daybreak, that is to say before the hour fixed for the attack.

The battle had been joined the 5th, the order to stop firing being given at seven o'clock; the following day, the Emperor passed the night upon the heights of Borodino; the 7th was fought the bloody combat of the Moskowa: that day Napoleon was in the saddle from five o'clock in the morning.

His only repast that day was to take at noon a morsel of bread, dipped in Chambertin wine, without any water. A little earlier, at ten o'clock, he had taken a glass of punch, " because he was suffering from a heavy cold." [17]

The 8 September, the Emperor passed the night at the opening of the plain in the ruins of a village behind Mojaïsk; on his arrival the following day at Mojaïsk, he lodged in a house which was being built, on the left side of the square.[18] The Imperial quarter-master-general had not succeeded in finding in the town a more comfortable lodging than this new house, which had no doors, but possessed stoves; we have said how sensitive the Emperor was to cold. The first floor was reserved for the sovereign; hardly installed, he wished to resume his interrupted work with his secretaries, but found that he had lost his voice, and could neither speak nor dictate. In this situation, new for him, the Emperor was forced to resign himself to having recourse to his pen, and he began to cover the squares of paper with all the orders which filled his head. He called to his assistance his regular secretaries, Méneval and Fain, to whom were joined, under the circumstances, men little habituated to this secondary task, like the Prince de Neuchâtel (Berthier) and Comte Daru, without taking into account some minor officers on his staff — in short, the whole personnel, ordinary and extraordinary, was put under contribution; but they were halted at almost every line by the difficulty in deciphering the Imperial hieroglyphics. However, the Emperor, who finished writing an order every minute, rapped incessantly upon the

[17] Bausset, 2 *Mémoires*, 82.

[18] Schuermans, *Op. cit.*, 308– " He was suffering from a heavy cold which had troubled him since the 5th."

table, for them to come and get the rough drafts which he piled up.[19]

If we must accept the opinion of certain historians, Napoleon, "overwhelmed by the weight of his anxieties, prey to sufferings moral and physical, showed himself, in the text of these orders, very much below his usual form." To judge of this by one order, taken from many others, which he wrote with his own hand, on arriving at Mojaïsk, and which was addressed to his chief-of-staff (Berthier), it is difficult to agree that it emanated from a man whose faculties were notably impaired. This order reads as follows:

"Have a reconnaissance made of the town, and lay out a redoubt which turns the defile. Have two bridges built over the Moskowa. Write Prince Eugène that he can go to Rouza, and have bridges built at Serguiewo; collect a quantity of cattle and food-stuffs, and news. To the Duc d'Elchingen [Ney], to come to-morrow with his corps to Mojaïsk. Leave the Duc d'Abrantès [Junot] to guard the field of battle." [20]

Can one say that a mind, capable of issuing such orders, is temporarily clouded, and does not possess its usual clearness?

Napoleon made quite a long halt at Mojaïsk; he only left this place on the afternoon of the 12th,[21] "after having assured himself of the exact figures of the losses sustained by the two armies, of the movements of the enemy, of the quality of the rations, of the administrative service, of the early arrival at Smolensk of the battalions and squadrons on their way, and after having acquired the certainty that the ammunition consumed had been replaced." [22] Definitely, he did not cease for an instant, even in the most critical moments, to exercise the command; he at all times directed the operations, at least in their ensemble; marching indifferently at all hours of day or night, according to the necessity, and only taking a rest, a rela-

[19] Fain, *Manuscrit de 1812*, 45 *et seq.*
[20] Bégin, 5 *Op. cit.*, Chap. CXXII.
[21] Schuermans, 308.
[22] Bégin, *loc. cit.*

tive rest, at Mojaïsk, to take care there of his cold, which seems to have been no more than a banal incident, without the slightest gravity. It has seemed to us the more important to reduce to its exact proportions this episode in the morbid life of Napoleon, because certain writers have depicted it in the darkest tints.

The most accredited historian of the Russian Campaign, Comte de Ségur, has distinguished himself, among others, in this concert of pessimistic notes. According to him, the state of Napoleon's health, at this time, must have been the sole cause of the French disaster in this lamentable expedition. "The fate of Russia," he writes, "depended upon one more day of health, which failed Napoleon even on the field of the Moskowa." And the historian shows us the Emperor anxious, irresolute, in a state of torpor wholly unusual. "During nearly this entire day [the day of Borodino], he was seen sitting down, or walking slowly, before and a little to the left of the redoubt taken on the 5th, upon the edge of a ravine, far from the conflict, which he could hardly observe, after he had passed the heights. . . . He made only a few gestures of sad resignation when news was brought him, every few minutes, of the loss of his best generals. He arose several times to take a few steps, and then again sat down." We stop the quotation at this point, the remainder being only verbiage.

In one of the most stirring passages of his work upon Napoleon, Tolstoy has not failed to mock, with considerable humor, those who have made this campaign turn upon a cold in Napoleon's head. "Indeed," he says, "if it had depended on the will of Napoleon to fight or not to fight the battle of Borodino; to make or not to make such and such manœuvres, it is evident that the cold in the head, which had an influence upon the manifestation of his will, could become the cause of the salvation of Russia; and that the valet who forgot, the 5 September 1812, to give Napoleon his water-proof boots was the real saviour of Russia! Once embarked on this current of ideas, this situation is inevitable, as inevitable as the deduction which Voltaire jok-

ingly made, in assuring us that the night of Saint Bartholomew was due to a derangement of the stomach of Charles IX." [23]

Far from failing to acknowledge that the course of events can be linked to physical troubles, and more particularly to mental troubles, in the case of the being who presides over those events, it is evident, writes Dr. Cabanès, that other factors must be taken into account, and that "Cromwell's grain of sand" has not always the deciding influence that too positive minds lend to it. As Tolstoy very judiciously says: "Napoleon, at the battle of Borodino, . . . did nothing which could impair the success of the day; he accepted the most reasonable opinions; he did not confuse his orders; he did not contradict himself; . . . he did not abandon the battle-field."

The fate of this battle, therefore, was not bound up with his state of health; a passing indisposition was in no way equivalent to a general up-set of his organization.[24]

[23] Tolstoy, *Napoléon et la campagne de Russie.*
[24] Cabanès, *Op. cit.*, 202–203.

CHAPTER FORTY-FOUR

JUNE — DECEMBER 1812

THE DEBACLE

Difficulties of the Russian Expedition — Napoleon's Elaborate Preparations — Causes of His Failure — The Cold Rains — Losses of Men and Horses — The Long Stops at Vilna and Vitepsk — The Incompetence of Jérôme — Napoleon's Fine Strategy Thwarted — Battle at Smolensk — Escape of the Enemy — Napoleon Should Have Halted There — He Advances to the Moskowa — Indecisive Victory at Borodino — Occupation of Moscow — The City Burned — Napoleon in the Kremlin — His Fatal Delay — His Vain Hopes for Peace — Alexander Refuses to Negotiate — The Disastrous Retreat

THE invasion of Russia by Napoleon in the summer of 1812, in the words of Lord Wolseley, was "about the most stupendous undertaking upon which any man has ever ventured." The difficulties of the task lay in the nature of the country to be overrun, in its great distance from the French frontier, and, above all, in the severity of its winter climate. The strongest ally of the Czar in the campaign was to be "*Général Janvier.*"

The more we study the history of this great campaign, the more we are struck, not merely with the colossal nature of Napoleon's task, but with the careful provisions he made for overcoming the difficulties with which the operation bristled. The general scheme was worked out with a splendor of conception and a mastery of detail which stands unrivalled in the history of the world.

If, then, the "appalling failure" of the campaign cannot be attributed to the state of Napoleon's health, what other explanation can we find for this amazing change in the fortunes of one who had long been the "spoiled child of Victory"?

The principal cause of the Russian débâcle may be summed

up in the single word — *procrastination:* Napoleon's delay of over a month in opening the campaign, on account of the bread famine in Paris; his unnecessary visit to Dresden; his stay of more than thirty days at Vilna and Vitepsk; and his fatal tarry of five weeks at Moscow. After the burning of the city, he should have begun his retreat at once, filling every wagon with food supplies, instead of allowing the soldiers to load them with booty. The winter did not set in until the 7 November, nearly three weeks after the troops left Moscow; and, by that date, Napoleon might have reached Vilna, almost unmolested. There he would have found abundant supplies; and there he could have made his winter headquarters, while hurrying up reënforcements from every direction. But he was no longer willing to *reculer pour mieux sauter,* as he had done in the campaigns of Italy and of Wagram. The Emperor Napoleon had succeeded General Bonaparte!

Even as early as the passage of the Niemen, the last week in June, Napoleon had a warning of the uncertainty of the Russian climate. The traverse had begun in very fine weather; but suddenly the splendor of the morning, and the freshness of the earlier hours, were succeeded by an almost unbearable temperature. The sky became overcast; across the sombre horizon there ran blinding flashes of lightning. Soon the storm broke, and torrents of rain beat upon the French battalions. The deluge, however, made no impression on the veterans of the Grand Army: as one of the officers, a fanatical follower of the Emperor, wrote in his *Souvenirs,* it was marvellous to see "this vain violence of the sky against the earth."[1] Besides, the storm was of brief duration; the crossing was not interrupted for a moment, and the troops of all arms continued their steady march.

During the following days, the weather continued variable, with alternative sunshine and rain, and no promise of clearing. On the morning of the 28 June, Napoleon entered Vilna, and there he received a second, and even ruder warning that, in the climate of the North, he must count upon a foe more to be

[1] Boulart, 242, cited 3 Vandal, 487.

feared than the inferior and scattered forces of Russia. During the afternoon of the 29th, a series of heavy thunder-storms broke over all the territory occupied by the Grand Army. The Guard were surprised on their march toward Vilna; the three other corps, in their evolutions around the city; and the army of Prince Eugène, in its cantonments upon the borders of the Niemen. The violence of the elements was terrible; the thunder and lightning were incessant, and many soldiers were struck in the ranks. When the storm had passed over, the rain continued to fall in glacial torrents, accompanied by a sudden drop of the temperature: there was a complete change in the aspect of Nature, a reminder of winter in the midst of the ardors of summer.

The soldiers, wrapped in their dripping cloaks, passed the night in their inundated bivouacs, without fires, and with no shelter against the wind which blew in gusts. At daybreak, their eyes fell upon a desolating scene: the camps were transformed into lakes of mire; all of the objects necessary to the life of the troops were dispersed or destroyed; the wagons were lying on their sides. Even more disastrous, the horses were dead, or dying, by the thousands. Nourished for several weeks on green grass, deprived of oats, stretched to the limit with fatigue, these animals had not been able to endure the sudden drop in the temperature. By a phenomenon without parallel in the history of war, a single night had done the work of an epidemic. Several officers, overcome with despair, inveighed against a campaign which had begun so badly, and against the one who had led them into such a land. General Sorbier, commander of the artillery of the Guard, cried that "one must be crazy to undertake such an enterprise." When the losses, estimated as high as ten thousand horses, had been calculated, it was realized that this disaster had permanently impaired the efficiency of the cavalry and artillery, disorganized the service of supplies, and entailed for the whole army a future of want and suffering.[2]

[2] *Cf.* the works of Ségur, Gourgaud, Cogniet, Boulart; and correspondence preserved in the Archives nationales, *A F*, IV, 1644.

That same night, of Monday the 29 June, a ball was given at Vilna in honor of the Emperor. Long before the guests had arrived, the storm broke; the cold, wintry rain began to fall, and was to continue to fall day after day over the low woods and sterile plains of Lithuania.

The Emperor was one of the last to arrive. As his rapid, characteristic step was heard upon the broad staircase, the conversation and the movement in the rooms above ceased, and the music was silenced. Many men have left the record of the hour that followed: the impression made upon all by the short, stout figure, the anxious and set face of the master, who still dominated the Continent with power undiminished.

The Emperor was present at the fête only long enough to send for one man after another, and exchange a few words, generally in the form of question and reply, followed by an abrupt command. Long before sunrise, Napoleon took his departure, and he was the first to leave.

The early hours of the same morning found the Emperor alert and wide-awake in his cabinet, receiving the reports of his generals and dictating his answers. The news he received was the beginning of what was to come in, hour after hour, during the succeeding days. The dirt-roads of that barren country were knee-deep with mud; many of the main convoys had broken down; even the Guard had passed twenty-four hours without bread. Eugène's command, two whole corps, had not yet passed the river. The significant phrase of the Viceroy's long, detailed despatch was the words, " On account of the rain. . . ." Jérôme, always failing him, offered no excuses for his inexplicable delay; and Napoleon dictated a short note, in which he insisted that the right wing should press forward — the movement upon which depended the success of his plan to prevent the junction of the two main Russian armies.

Day after day found Napoleon still in his cabinet at Vilna, reading the despatches, coördinating information, and dictating his orders. The reports which came under his eyes were enough to appall the stoutest of hearts: less and less horses day by day; wagons abandoned with their loads; a horse unhar-

nessed from a mired cart to replace an artillery animal which had given out, and been killed for food; requisitions from the country, systematically divested by the retiring Russians, yielding not a tenth of the remounts and supplies needed.

Men also had begun to perish by the thousand, carried off by enteric diseases, caused by their drinking the polluted water, and eating the fresh-cut corn, which they either baked roughly or boiled in water. At night they crouched shivering around the smoky fires, built of sodden wood, under the little trees and in the marshes of the steppes, without shelter from the dripping skies.

So passed all of that first week of July 1812, much of the next; and the rain still continued. Then at last came definite news from the south — through sloth or muddle, Jérôme had failed to hold the second Russian army: Bagration had escaped from the mesh, and was hastening to rejoin Barclay. The first part of Napoleon's well-conceived plan had failed through the incompetence of his brother; the Emperor was forced to detach Davout from his own great command, and send him southward in the hope of heading off the enemy. It was too late; and in the plains far to the east he was to meet the united forces of the two armies.

At last, Napoleon decided that his reorganization was sufficiently effected: his corps were all in hand; supplies were up, sufficient at least for the moment; the rain was now over, and the roads passable. On the night of Thursday, the 16 July, at eleven o'clock the Emperor entered his berline at Vilna, and started on the "long, long trail," which was to end only in the "Sacred City" of Russia.

In leaving Vilna, Napoleon took the Saint Petersburg road, as if he meant to march upon that city; but this was only a feint to deceive the enemy. Having marched some fifty miles in a northeasterly direction, toward the Russian entrenched camp at Drissa, he turned sharp to the right, and advanced on Vitepsk, where he hoped to catch Barclay. In this, he was disappointed, as the Russian forces fell back skilfully before him from day to day.

At Vitepsk, where he arrived on the 28 July, Napoleon learned that Russia had made peace with Sweden and with Turkey, thus setting free two considerable bodies of troops to reënforce the armies then operating on the left and on the right of the French line of advance. However, there were vast distances for them to traverse before they could enter the zone of Napoleon's operations, and he hoped to bring the war to an end before they could interfere with his movements. This should have been an additional warning to him against any advance that year beyond the Dnieper.

After a perhaps unavoidable stay of over a fortnight at Vitepsk, Napoleon again set his troops in motion, for Smolensk, a hundred miles away. He still hoped to prevent the union of the two Russian armies, and possibly to cut them off from Smolensk. But Barclay and Bagration succeeded in effecting their junction on the 3 August, ten days before he left Vitepsk. How this was brought about requires a few more words of explanation. It is essential to have a clear idea of these initial operations, which formed the critical phase of the campaign, in order to understand how the failure to hold the enemy at the outset of the struggle led directly to the final disaster.

At the time that Napoleon crossed the Niemen, the last of June, his forces were divided into two main groups — the one to the north, at Kovno, under his own direct command; the other to the south, in front of Grodno, under the orders of his brother Jérôme. Opposite to Napoleon was the main Russian army, under Barclay, and facing Jérôme was the second army, commanded by Bagration.

Bearing in mind these positions, we can understand the strategic plan which Napoleon had formed. The two wings of both armies were separated by an interval of approximately one hundred miles. With his main army Napoleon proposed to drive Barclay off in a northeasterly direction — that is to say, away from the other Russian command under Bagration.

With his own greatly superior forces, Napoleon could always so overlap Barclay that the Russian army could not get away

to the right or the left, but must retreat in any direction that the Emperor chose. He did not propose, however, to drive Barclay northward and eastward indefinitely, but, at the proper moment, to stand in front of him, and hold him, while Jérôme carried out the second part of the general plan.

The duty of Jérôme was to " shepherd " Bagration, in similar manner, to the south and the east, so as to prevent the union of the two Russian forces. Provided Jérôme carried on his advance vigorously and continuously, he could compel the Russians to retreat in any direction he chose, precisely in the same manner that Napoleon controlled the movements of Barclay.

If this well-conceived plan of Napoleon's had been carried out as designed by him, the Russian campaign would have been decided in a few days. As in the Franco-Prussian war of 1870, there might have been a prolonged resistance of an ineffectual kind, but the two main armies of the enemy would have been put out of action.

Thus stated, it would seem that the plan of the Emperor should certainly have succeeded; and such would have been the case if, as in earlier campaigns, his whole army had been under his own direct command; or if, as at Auerstädt, the other wing had been in charge of an able lieutenant, like Davout, instead of the incompetent Jérôme. As matters turned out, Jérôme halted, sluggish and confused, in the very first stage of what should have been his rapid advance, and pursuit of the Russians. He gave Bagration three or four days' start, and the Russian second army was free to escape directly eastward: all hope of steering it northward, and of trapping it against Napoleon's command was lost. This initial failure, due to the misconduct of Jérôme, was far-reaching in its results. It imposed upon Napoleon's advance a delay the effects of which were felt throughout the campaign. " It was this delay," writes Mr. Belloc, " which wasted the numerical strength of the Grand Army; which, therefore, permitted the Russians to render indecisive the action at Borodino; which brought what was left of the striking force of the invaders to Moscow from a month

to six weeks late; which therefore in part caused the too late departure, and the catastrophe of the frozen retreat." [3]

After the junction of the two Russian armies, Barclay found himself compelled by the growing discontent among his troops to offer battle. So, on the 7 August, he moved westward to meet the French; but, after a two days' march, his courage failed him, and he came to a halt. Learning of this movement, the Emperor quickly crossed the Dnieper, and marched on Smolensk by the south bank. On the 16 August he appeared before the city, which was hastily occupied by two Russian corps, and to which Barclay fell back with all possible speed.

The city of Smolensk lies on the south bank of the Dnieper, in a beautiful amphitheatre of hills, with the suburb of Saint Petersburg on the opposite side of the river. It was a "Sacred City," one of the oldest in Russia, and at one time had contained 80,000 inhabitants, but the population had dwindled to not more than a quarter of that number.

When Napoleon rode up, a little before dark, he saw before him a long brick wall, encircling the city from the river above to the river below. It was twenty-five feet high, and ten feet thick, with a useless dry ditch. The wall was strong enough to resist the small field guns of that period, and it was too high to be escaladed easily. The houses, nearly all of wood, stood in extensive gardens; but, little could be seen above the walls except the trees, the roofs, and the painted and metaled domes of the churches. Napoleon deployed his vast army in an arc from the river to the river, parallel to, but at some distance from, the walls. His tent was pitched behind the centre of his line, in the midst of his Guard.

The French troops passed the night in their bivouacs, with few tents to shelter them. Napoleon seems to have believed that the Russians would attack him on the morrow, and give him the opening for which he had sought so long. But the next morning, the 17 August, the enemy remained quietly within his lines, and betrayed no desire to force a decision. This

[3] Belloc, 59.

strange hesitation on the part of Napoleon to attack, when he at last held the Russians in the hollow of his hand, has never been explained. Had he extended his right across the river above the town, and established a corps suitably supported upon the road to Moscow, he might have won a decisive victory. Barclay would have been forced to attack; and, if defeated, would have had no line of retreat except by the northerly road, toward Saint Petersburg: the road to Moscow would have been open to Napoleon!

Finally, late in the afternoon, the Emperor gave orders to attack, and the Russian outposts were driven back within the city. The batteries were then turned upon the walls, but no breach was made before night ended the combat. With a loss of some 10,000 men, Napoleon had accomplished absolutely nothing.

At sunrise the next morning, the French again advanced to the attack, only to find the town undefended. During the night, Barclay had crossed to the north bank, destroying behind him the only bridge across the river, and was already safely ahead of pursuit upon the Moscow road. For three whole days this strategically worthless town had held up the Grand Army, when time was of the essence.[4]

In some respects, this empty victory may be regarded as the turning-point of Napoleon's fate in this luckless campaign. He might have cut off the retreat of the united Russian armies; he might have forced them to attack him, under circumstances where all the chances were in his favor; he might have won a victory as brilliant as Austerlitz or Friedland, which would have forced Alexander to sue for peace. But Napoleon had failed: there had been no decision. "The hands of the Grand Army had met and clasped the air."[5]

Smolensk was the natural terminus of the campaign of 1812, and Napoleon should have halted there.[6] Indeed, he told

[4] See Belloc, 71–75; 3 Dodge, 537, 540.

[5] Belloc, 74.

[6] This is the opinion of nearly all of the military critics. See Henderson, 1 *Stonewall Jackson*, 133; Belloc, 76–83; 3 Dodge, 555–559; Wolseley, 25–27. On the other hand, such great authorities as Jomini and Clausewitz, "the fathers

Metternich at Dresden that he had no intention of going beyond Smolensk the first year.[7] From a military point of view, he could stop there, fortify the line of the Dvina and Dnieper, and be in a very strong strategic position. As he was draining a large section of the Empire, the Russians would sooner or later be forced to come forward and attack him. If he advanced to Moscow, it was certain that he could not maintain himself there. He would be farther from his base than any conqueror in modern times, and he could not hope to keep open his long line of communications. A line of operations six hundred miles in length, through a hostile country, demanded large forces to protect it, and Napoleon no longer had sufficient numerical superiority. The 360,000 men with whom he crossed the Niemen had dwindled to 230,000 at Vitepsk, and to 150,000 when he left Smolensk. At Borodino, he had 135,000, and he entered Moscow with only 95,000. These figures demonstrate that he had not sufficient forces to protect his communications. "At Smolensk," says Colonel Dodge, "the military situation was within control; at Moscow it was beyond the control of any man. At so distant a point, Napoleon could rely only on the moral force of his position: his military situation would be utterly untenable. . . . The advance on Moscow now could succeed only if Alexander and Russia were content to be browbeaten by a show of military power Napoleon no longer possessed. Yet Jomini and Clausewitz both approve Napoleon's decision to advance from Smolensk on Moscow, as his only proper course. It is difficult to agree with these eminent authorities." [8]

On this point, Yorck de Wartenburg says: "From a purely military point of view Napoleon could have stopped at Smolensk. . . . But, in the eyes of Europe, it would have been the acknowledgment of the check of his enterprise, of the im-

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of the study of strategy," think that Napoleon's decision was his only proper course. (See 3 Jomini, 371–372.) Yorck de Wartenburg also states that the Emperor never "seriously considered this illogical plan." (2, 145.)

[7] See 1 Metternich, 122; 12 Thiers, 459–460.

[8] 3 Dodge, 558–559.

possibility for his strategy to reach the goal assigned by his politics. In remaining at Smolensk, he could never subdue Russia to his will, and this admission would have had upon subjugated Europe consequences of which the effects would have been incalculable.

" Moreover, even from a purely military point of view, such an attitude might have led to his ruin. . . . As the renewal of hostilities depended only upon them, the Russians would not have fallen again into the error of Austerlitz, that is to say, of a premature offensive, so that the military situation of the Emperor probably would have gained nothing. Therefore, one could not counsel the Emperor to stop at Smolensk.

" On the other hand, what were the advantages offered by the march on Moscow? . . . Did Napoleon, at least, have at his disposition the military forces necessary to maintain himself at Moscow? We answer in the negative. . . . The utopian politics of the Emperor had placed his strategy, at Smolensk, in a situation where victory was no longer possible. To remain at Smolensk, was to acknowledge himself vanquished; to push on to Moscow, was to rush to meet defeat." [9]

Even before reaching Smolensk, the outlook was so grave that the Emperor, contrary to his habit, called in some of his marshals to a council of war, the first that he had held since Essling. Some favored holding the Dvina-Dnieper line; others advised pushing the operation to the end, and with these Napoleon sided, for he could see no issue except to conquer a peace or admit his failure. He still believed in his " star," and could not realize the possibility of defeat. He also relied upon his knowledge of the character of Alexander to obtain a satisfactory peace after the decisive battle which he felt sure of winning.

A great naval commander, Nelson, had said, of the enemy's fleet, that one should first find it, and then " sink, burn, and destroy." For many years, Napoleon had solved his military problems in that same final fashion. He thought: " If I can bring them to a stand, and I finally shall, *then* I shall break

[9] Yorck de Wartenburg, 2 *Napoléon, chef d'armée,* 164–168.

them. They will be no more; and this campaign, like all my others, will end in a clap of thunder."

Therefore he went forward — but he was wrong. He was allowing experience, a memory, a habit — the effect of past decisive victories — to cloud his reason. "He had two incompatible pictures before his mind: one, the nature of the problem; the other, habit or memory: victory immediate. He trusted the last. He went forward." [10]

It was not until the 25 August that Napoleon rode out of Smolensk with his Guard, on the long march to Moscow, 250 miles away. The cavalry under Murat had been on the trail of the enemy for several days, but the French horses were in such a miserable condition that the pursuit was very slow. The road to Moscow passes through a fertile country, but the Russians in their retreat had converted it into a desert. The French found every village abandoned, many of them burned; all food and fodder had been carried off or destroyed.

The trains and the guns followed the wide sandy road between its borders of tall trees. Upon either side, in the fields adjoining the route, marched the army, the infantry upon a front of eighty men, to the right of the road and to the left; and outside of them, the cavalry, by squadrons. The cold rain of the first weeks of the campaign had been followed by a season of dry, hot weather, and the baked, sandy soil was ground to powder by the passing host, making an intolerable dust. It rose in clouds from the first ranks, and filled the air. The eyes and the lips of the men were crusted with it, and there was an awful thirst, with no water to quench it. In these huge, boundless steppes, near the partings of the great rivers, there was little or no water for the marching men. If the cold of the succeeding winter had not blotted out the memory of these trying days, the heat and the thirst of this march would have remained celebrated in history.

On Sunday, the 6 September, the Grand Army finally found its elusive foe drawn up in line of battle, less than a hundred

[10] Belloc, 82–83.

miles from Moscow, near the little village of Borodino, on the Kolotsa, an affluent of the Moskowa, which also gave its name to the battle. A few days before, the Czar, disappointed with the Fabian tactics of Barclay, had placed Kutusov in command. This general had been with Alexander at Austerlitz, and more recently had gained some fame in the war with Turkey. He was now seventy years of age, too portly to ride, and very inactive. Barclay commanded the Russian right wing, and Bagration, who was to lose his life in the battle, was in charge of the left.

The battle of Borodino, or of the Moskowa, as the French generally call it, was one fought in parallel order, "all along the line," a mere push of masses, without grand-tactics of any kind. It would have been easy for Napoleon to have manœuvred the Russians out of position, but he was afraid that his foe would once more escape him. There were about 250,000 men on the field, nearly equally divided between the two armies, and the losses were greater than in any battle of the nineteenth century, with the possible exception of Eylau. It was a French victory, for the Russians abandoned the field; but the French practically took no trophies, despite Napoleon's claim in a letter to the Emperor Francis. At the decisive moment, after the taking of the Great Redoubt, about the middle of the afternoon, Napoleon might have gained a decisive victory if he had put in the Guard; but he allowed this superb body of troops, still 20,000 strong, to stand idle the whole day long. For this action, he has been much criticized, but his course was probably wise under all the circumstances.

After the battle, the Russians retreated slowly to Moscow, closely followed by the French. Kutusov called a council of war, to decide whether the city should be defended, but refused to abide by the vote that it should not be abandoned. He was wise in deciding that the army was more important to Russia than even the "Sacred City." The last of his troops had hardly filed out by the east when the advance-guard of Murat entered by the Smolensk road.

The vanguard of the Grand Army broke camp before dawn on Monday the 14 September. Toward noon, as they rode

over a little ridge of ground, they saw before them, some miles away, a long dull line of white under the cloudy sky. This was Moscow.

As the French horsemen pulled up at the Smolensk Barrier, they were surprised to find no defenders at the gate: the great city had been totally abandoned. No man in modern times had ever had such an experience, and this fact should have given Napoleon cause for serious reflection.

On his arrival, late in the day, Napoleon at first refused to enter the city. He could hardly credit the reports brought to him, and for some hours remained in expectation of the arrival of some deputation of citizens to make a formal surrender of the town.

After dark he found shelter for the night in a wretched wooden cabin located in the western suburb of the city. At seven o'clock on the following morning, he rode into the town, and took possession of the Kremlin for his headquarters. The Kremlin, of which we have all heard so much, was simply a walled enclosure within another similar enclosure which formed the old city of Moscow. The low white walls of the latter stand in the central streets of the great city to-day, and preserve the memory of its ancient limits. The Kremlin, situated upon a low knoll, steep upon the river side, but descending gently toward the land, afforded then, as indeed it does to-day, a fair view over the city.

The pillage and the burning of that picturesque city is a well-known story, graphically told by many writers, and we do not propose to dwell upon it. Whether the city was deliberately burned by the Russians, or accidentally set on fire by the marauding French soldiers, is a question which probably never will be definitely settled.[11]

But Napoleon's fatal tarry at Moscow calls for a few words of comment. It was that delay, following on all the others,

[11] A recent writer, who has looked into the matter very carefully, seems inclined to believe that the Russians were responsible for the destruction of the city. (See Belloc, 130–140.)

which determined the fate of his army, and perhaps his own downfall. Among the many errors which he made in this campaign, the greatest lay in his misconception of Alexander's character. This is a curious fact, for Napoleon knew Alexander well, and had had many opportunities of gauging the ability and temperament of his former ally. The explanation, however, is not, as assumed by Lord Wolseley,[12] that Napoleon was a "bad judge of character," so much as that, in his later campaigns, he was blinded by self-confidence. As Marmont said of him, the following year, "He no longer believed in truth when it conflicted with his passions, his interests, or his moods." His unlimited self-reliance, which at first was one of the principal causes of his success, had ended by becoming fatal. With him, as Bourrienne expressed it, "to wish and to believe were one and the same thing." He had gradually developed the feeling that failure was for him impossible, and that his own views and acts were infallibly right. When he ceased to tolerate dissent, argument fell into disuse, and every one obeyed his orders without demur, even when it was obvious that the facts were all against him. His optimism in this instance was all the more remarkable, because he had been warned by Caulaincourt, the previous year, of Alexander's plans for the campaign, and his fixed resolve not to make peace while there was a single French soldier on Russian soil.

During the conflagration, Napoleon was forced to leave the Kremlin, as there was powder stored in it, and he took up his quarters in a suburban palace to the north of the city, on the Saint Petersburg road. On Sunday, the fire had practically burned out, and he returned to the Kremlin for good.

On Wednesday, the 23 September, the Emperor went out for the first time with his staff to view the city. The weather was clear and cool, and he wore his familiar uniform: the green coat with the red collar, very plain, with no lace upon it; the famous hat, with its little cockade; the decoration of the Légion d'honneur upon his left breast, and the broad red ribbon across his chest. He rode a quiet little Polish cob, white in

[12] Wolseley, 30.

color as usual; and the staff were mounted on large thoroughbreds. After this, Napoleon rode out every day; but most of the time he remained shut up in the palace, awaiting the peace messenger from Alexander, who never came. Meanwhile September came to an end, and the first days of October passed. Then, on Monday, the 5 October, Napoleon sent Lauriston to Kutusov, as an ambassador to sue for peace. Nearly two weeks passed, with no news from Lauriston; finally, on Sunday, the 18 October, as the Emperor was holding a review in the courtyard of the Kremlin, the booming of cannon was heard to the southward. Everyone understood what this meant: the Russians had broken the armistice; all hope of peace was gone. The next day, the retreat began.

As this is not a history of Napoleon's campaigns, we cannot deal with the details of this disastrous retreat.[13] It was one of the most dreadful events in military history, and the story is full of interesting incidents. By the time Napoleon reached Smolensk (9 November) the Grand Army had lost half the men who left Moscow only three weeks before. At Smorgoni, on the 5 December, the Emperor turned the command over to Murat, and set out for Paris, believing that his rapid return to France was the only hope of saving his Empire.

[13] For an excellent, brief, picturesque narrative, see Hilaire Belloc's *Napoleon's Campaign of 1812, and the Retreat from Moscow*, frequently cited in the preceding pages.

CHAPTER FORTY-FIVE

MAY 1812 — MAY 1813

MURAT AND EUGENE

MURAT — At Dantzic — His Demands of the Emperor — His Strength and Weakness as a Cavalry Leader — His Valor at Borodino — His Determination to Return Home — Letter from Caroline — His Jealousy of His Wife — His Discouragement during the Retreat — Napoleon Leaves Him in Command — His New Demands of the Emperor — His Neglect of Affairs — He Announces His Departure — His Attack on the Emperor — He Resigns, and Leaves for Naples

EUGENE — He Assumes Command of the Grand Army — His Letter to the Emperor — Napoleon's Reply — Eugène's Fidelity to His Stepfather — His Fine Character — His Services during the Campaign — His Difficult Task as General-in-Chief — He Rejoins the Emperor in the Campaign of Saxony — He Is Sent Home to Milan — The Emperor's Gratitude

MURAT was in no respect behind Jérôme in the luxury and refinement of his arrangements for the campaign, in the etiquette with which he surrounded himself; but, as soon as the operations began, he was once more the *beau sabreur*.

Leaving Paris on the morning of the 12 May, the King travelled directly to Cassel, where, in the absence of the sovereigns, he made a visit to their château. Then he proceeded to Dantzic, by way of Berlin and Posen, as the Emperor had refused him permission to appear at Dresden.

Taking advantage of the Emperor's need of him in the coming campaign, as soon as Napoleon arrived, on the 8 June, Murat demanded of him two favors which had constantly been refused him: first, the return to Naples of his troops employed in Spain; and second, the withdrawal of the French Corps of Observation from his kingdom. Although the Emperor did not immediately grant his requests, at the end of two months he

gave Murat satisfaction on both points, and thereby released two valuable pledges for his brother-in-law's fidelity.

On the field of battle, Murat was one of the greatest cavalry leaders that the world has ever known. At a glance he seized the main point, and promptly took advantage of it. Absolutely fearless of death, whip in hand, in his striking theatrical costume, he charged at the head of his squadrons, and overwhelmed the squares of the enemy. There, education and intelligence were of little account, and Murat, actuated entirely by instinct, appeared as the very god of battle. In the storm and stress of the combat, his head always remained clear, and no one was quicker than he to take advantage of the slightest opening, to profit by the panic of the enemy.

As long as he was on the aggressive, Murat was unique; but, on the defensive, he was limp and spiritless. He lost his *coup d'œil,* became easily discouraged, opposed to bad fortune neither resistance nor tenacity. He never really knew his *métier,* and never tried to learn it. "He excelled in having his men killed, but he paid no attention to having them live." Men and horses are things of flesh and blood: they need rest, sleep, and nourishment. They cannot march endlessly, in all kinds of weather, on every kind of ground. To such details, Murat paid no attention. In a short campaign, where he commanded bodies of comparatively small size, and which could easily be renewed, Murat's policy could be endured, so long as he produced the results desired. But, in a long campaign, like that of Russia, at great distances from the dépôts, where men could not be recruited or horses replaced, Murat in a brief period of time saw disappear, regiments, brigades, divisions, and finally whole army corps of cavalry. He himself used up sixty horses, and gave the matter no thought; but how about the man who had only one, and was useless as a cavalryman if his horse gave out? In the very first stage of the campaign, the heavy cavalry was reduced by a third, the light, by a half. But Murat's head was turned by this immense body of horsemen under his command: four army corps, twelve divisions, 36,000 men; he

thought that they were inexhaustible, irresistible. He squandered his resources like a drunken gambler.

Murat found but little opportunity to distinguish himself until the army reached Borodino: there he was prodigious. Foot-soldier and horseman by turn: at one moment charging, sword in hand, at the head of the Razout division; at another, in the midst of the squares of Friant, resisting the furious attacks of the Russian Cuirassiers; finally, at the supreme crisis, leading the charge of the Second Cavalry Corps on the Great Redoubt, he was everywhere brilliant and invincible, like a paladin of ancient times, like one of the Mameluke chiefs he had vanquished, like one of the Moorish kings from whom he was perhaps descended.[1]

But, by the time the army reached Moscow, Murat was discouraged, homesick, weary of the war. Little by little the soldier faded away, and the king took his place. He longed for his children, his Court, his ministers, and above all for his sycophants. "His Majesty" was not pleased with the familiarity with which he was treated by his old comrades-in-arms.

In the fulness of victory, even before a single reverse had befallen the Grand Army, he made known his intention to depart. One of his aides de camp, who reached Naples early in October, was instructed to announce that the King would soon be home.[2] His intention was also announced in a letter to the Queen, written just after the battle of Borodino.

A few days later, the army entered Moscow in triumph, and every one looked forward to an early peace. But the burning of the city entirely altered the situation, and wrecked all of Murat's plans. His presence with the army was more necessary than ever before, and the Emperor refused to listen to his demand for a congé. Then, Murat seems to have made up his mind to quit the army, even against Napoleon's wishes. On the 16 October, Caroline wrote him:

[1] 7 Masson, 335–336.
[2] Durant to Bassano, 10 October 1812.

"Mon ami, I have just received your letter of the 20 September, and am greatly troubled by it. I can see that you are sad and discontented. I cannot tell you how distressed I am that it should be thus with you. Be calm, mon ami, and beware of throwing away in a moment all the fruits of so perilous and so brilliant a campaign. . . . Do not lose heart. . . . It seems as though you are going wilfully to reject and demolish your good fortune. Come back again to your wife, to your children, but leave the path open to return to the Emperor when you may desire to do so."

One of the reasons for Murat's desire to return home was his jealousy of Caroline, and his fear that she was extending her power during his absence. In one of his letters he says, sarcastically: "Why should I not be pleased? You write that my ministers can look after matters as well as I, and that you are putting my troops through their manœuvres. If that is so, come and take my place here. Every one would be delighted. The Russians would be vanquished in advance, and the bulletins would carry the news of your brilliant triumphs to every one in Naples and Paris. They are dumb concerning *my* small achievements." [3]

Murat felt that the Emperor did not give his exploits sufficient prominence in the Bulletins of the Grand Army, and this was another of his grievances. It was in vain that Napoleon treated him with the utmost kindness, inviting him to his table, and accompanying him on his march.

When the retreat began, Murat allowed his forces to crumble away. Of the four corps of the Cavalry Reserve, there remained only 1200 sabres on the 9 November, and 400 at the Beresina on the 26th. He permitted Platow and his Cossacks almost to cut him off, and barely escaped with his life. He rejoined the Emperor, leaving 36 pieces of artillery in the hands of the enemy. He travelled in the carriage of the Emperor, praising in every letter to his daughter the master's kindness to him, as if trying to curry favor in case the Cabinet noir reported

[3] Murat to Caroline, 13 October 1812.

his effusions. He had lost all his *élan,* and was in an absolute state of discouragement.

Seventy miles to the eastward of Vilna, at Molodechno, where all the couriers had been forced to stop, the Emperor found the news of the Malet conspiracy at Paris. On reading the despatches of Cambacérès, he comprehended at once the danger of the situation. In spite of the establishment of the hereditary Empire, the Austrian marriage, and the birth of the King of Rome, his dynasty was not stable: if he disappeared, all would crumble away. Under the circumstances, only one course was possible: to depart at once, traverse Germany before the news was generally known, and appear in person at the Tuileries.

But it was necessary to leave some one at the head of the remains of the Grand Army, and, in making his choice, he was restrained by the claims of precedence. He was forced to select, not the most capable commander, but the one of highest rank. The King (Murat) ranked the Viceroy (Eugène), who took precedence of the Prince (Berthier), and he, of the marshals. He could not ask Murat to serve under Eugène, much less under Berthier or Davout, and he felt bound to choose the King of Naples. He could not have made a worse selection, for Murat had entirely lost his *moral.*

On the 5 December, two days after receiving the news, the Emperor set out for Paris, travelling under the name of M. de Rayneval, former secretary of the embassy of the Duc de Vicence. He was accompanied only by Duroc, Caulaincourt, and a Polish captain, who acted as interpreter. On the 10th, he arrived at Warsaw, where he passed the day; at two o'clock on the morning of the 14th, he reached Dresden, where he took a bath and secured a little rest. At seven o'clock the same evening, after a long talk with the King of Saxony, he continued his route to Paris, and entered the Tuileries at eleven o'clock on the night of the 18 December.[4]

Feeling himself indispensable, Murat took advantage of the occasion to make of the Emperor, prior to his departure, several

[4] Schuermans, 314.

demands, including the recall of the too clear-sighted Durant, and the appointment of the complaisant Pérignon in his place. Just before Napoleon entered his carriage, Murat procured his signature also to a decree conferring "on our very dear nephew, Prince Lucien, son of our very dear brother the King of Naples," the principality of Ponte-Corvo, formerly held by Bernadotte.

On his arrival at Vilna (8 December), Murat was so thoroughly demoralized that he seemed to have lost the power of thinking or of acting. To Maret, who handed him the Emperor's instructions, to hold Vilna and make his winter headquarters there, he said: "No! I will not let myself be taken in this *pot de chambre!*" To Berthier, who asked for orders, he replied: "Give the orders yourself: you know better than I what it is necessary to do." He paid no attention to anything. In the vast storehouses at Vilna, there were four million rations of flour, the same of meat, nine million of wine and brandy; immense quantities of forage, of clothing, of equipment of every kind; and an enormous arsenal, which included thirty-four thousand muskets. But Murat issued no orders to distribute these supplies among the disarmed troops, who were perishing of cold and hunger — no orders even to destroy them; and all fell into the hands of the enemy.

The retreat, which soon became a flight, was led by the valiant King of Naples, who surpassed all in his celerity. Pushing on through Kovno to Königsberg, leaving the army to its fate, Murat's one aim, openly avowed, was to get back to Naples; and, before the Emperor could possibly learn what was taking place, his brother-in-law was rushing desperately along the road to Italy.

In a letter to the Emperor, on the 16 December, Murat declared that everything was going from bad to worse; that it was impossible to conserve his command; that he would pass it over to the Viceroy, "more experienced than himself in the administration"; that he himself could be more useful at Naples or at Paris; that, if he had no reply in a fortnight, he would set out.

By the same courier Berthier sent a despatch in cipher to the Emperor: "The King of Naples, on the field of battle, is the first man to execute the orders of the general-in-chief; but, in all respects, he is the man the most incapable to command in chief. He must be replaced at once. The Viceroy is full of health and energy. The Duc d'Elchingen [Ney] and Marshal Gouvion-Saint-Cyr have his confidence."

In another letter to the Emperor, on the 17th, from Stallupönen, Murat protested once more against the orders which kept him with the army. The task of a great command is beyond his force. He has done enough to prove his devotion to the Emperor. He can no longer remain, when "the care of his States and the demands of his subjects recall him to their midst."

The following day, he called a kind of council of war of the corps-commanders. "He declared that it was no longer possible to serve a madman; that there was no more hope for his cause; that no prince in Europe had faith any longer in his words or his treaties. He himself was in despair because he had rejected the propositions of the English. Without that, he would still be a great king, like the Emperor of Austria and the King of Prussia."

Here, he was interrupted by Davout, who exclaimed: "The King of Prussia, the Emperor of Austria, are princes by the grace of God; but you, you are king only by the grace of Napoleon." Murat, somewhat disconcerted, muttered that "he was King of Naples as Francis was Emperor of Austria, and that he could do as he pleased." [5]

Berthier was too prudent to report this amazing scene to the Emperor, and wrote only: "There is much uncertainty in the thoughts of the King; and, more than ever, I refer to the coded note, addressed to Your Majesty, regarding the state of affairs."

It is impossible now to state definitely whether the remarks of Murat were simply impulsive and thoughtless, or whether they were the result of an understanding with the Austrians and Prussians. On the 14 December, he had authorized Schwar-

[5] Cited 7 Masson, 344–345.

zenberg to retire from Slonim toward his own frontier; and, a week later, he had approved of the secret armistice between the Austrians and Russians, under the terms of which the former were to withdraw from the Grand Duchy. At the same time, the defection of the Prussian corps of York struck a severe blow to the French cause in Germany.

From Posen, on the 15 January, Murat wrote the Emperor: "Sire, although I have written Your Majesty that I could not retain the command of the Grand Army, I should not, nevertheless, have taken the course of leaving, except for the state of health to which I find myself reduced for the past five or six days, which absolutely prevents me from taking charge of affairs." The malady, of which he speaks, was a threatening attack of jaundice.

In his letter, Murat enclosed copies of letters addressed to Berthier and Eugène. To the major-general, he announced simply the transmission of the command. To the viceroy, whom he addressed as "my dear nephew," he said: "I have retained the command of the Grand Army as long as I could; to-day, my health forces me to abandon it, and I am certain to have fulfilled the intentions of the Emperor, as well as to have justified the expectation of the army, in turning it over to Your Imperial and Royal Highness."

In vain, Berthier and Daru begged him at least to await the orders of the Emperor; he would consent only to defer his departure until the arrival of Eugène. On the evening of the 17 January, accompanied by one aide de camp, he entered his carriage, and travelled directly to Naples, without any stop on the way, which, as Eugène wrote, "was not so bad for an invalid."

Eugène refused to receive the command from the hands of Murat, taking the ground that the Emperor alone had the power to relieve one commander, and to appoint another. In his eyes, Murat was nothing less than a deserter, who had no right to turn his command over to another officer. But, upon the insistence of Berthier, he finally assumed the charge, pending further orders from the Emperor. On the 16 January, Ber-

thier wrote: " I have persuaded the Viceroy to assume the command provisionally. I have assured him of my zeal, notwithstanding my present state of ill-health. Your Majesty will realize how important it is to organize the Grand Army, and name your lieutenant-general by decree. I do not presume to make any reflection upon the conduct of the King." The following day, Eugène wrote the Emperor: " There being no marshal of the Empire here, and finding myself the sole lieutenant of Your Majesty, I have provisionally taken the centre of the command until the moment that Your Majesty has wished to name a general-in-chief."

On the 22 January, the Emperor replied: " My son, take the command of the Grand Army. I regret that I did not leave it to you at the time of my departure. I flatter myself that you would have returned more slowly, and that I should not have sustained such immense losses. The past misfortunes are beyond remedy."

In accepting this heavy responsibility, Eugène displayed the true grandeur of his soul. The tie of gratitude which bound him to his stepfather had led him to accept from the Emperor, in the past three years, humiliations which few persons could have endured, He had persuaded his mother to resign herself to the divorce; and had supported the decree in his address to the Senate. Deprived of his rank of adopted son of the Emperor, he had seen his wife, so proud of her Wittelsbach descent, march the last of the Family in the Imperial cortège. Dispossessed of his title of heir-presumptive to the throne of Italy, he had been forced to accept, in exchange, the problematical succession to the grand-duchy of Frankfort. Napoleon had kept none of the promises made to the Court of Bavaria, at the time of Eugène's marriage, and later to the Italian Chambers; yet, every time that an emergency had arisen, the Emperor had called upon Eugène to stand in the breach, and had always found him, not only ready, but willing.

Eugène was not a genius, but he had intelligence and application. He had proved himself in all the relations of life: he was a good son, a good brother, a good husband, a good father, and

a good soldier. In entering on the last campaign, he had had no train of mistresses or favorites; no fourgons of perfumery. In his suite he had no non-combatants, except his two secretaries, and a Bavarian painter, thanks to whom the Russian expedition would be preserved in a series of interesting pictures. Through his admiration for Augusta as a princess, as well as his love for her as a woman, he had become more German than Italian, in his character and his manners. In war, he had profited by the lessons of his great master, but he would never be more than a faithful student.

At the opening of the Russian campaign, he had been called upon to repair the faults of Jérôme; but, through no error of his own, he had not been successful. At Borodino, he had carefully carried out the instructions of the Emperor, and his rôle had been an honorable one. In the retreat, at Malo-Jaroslowitz, with 20,000 men he had held off 80,000 Russians, and merited the praises of the Emperor, as well as the acclamations of his troops. During the trying weeks which followed, he displayed on every occasion the highest courage, a serenity of spirit, an indifference to physical discomfort, a constancy of purpose, which won for him later the eulogy of Napoleon: "We all of us made mistakes, with the sole exception of Eugène."

The task which the Emperor had assigned to Eugène was indeed a Herculean one: to rally, assemble, and organize the mass of fugitives, whom Murat had abandoned; to infuse courage in the commanders, who, one and all, were trying to escape to Paris; to watch the treacherous Austrians; to escape the Russians, who were now pressing their pursuit. Withdrawing step by step, the Grand Army was forced to abandon Posen (12 February) and retreat to the line of the Oder; on the 9 March, it was back to Leipzig. By this time, the army, which at first had only some 17,000 effectives, had been increased to 50,000 men, and Eugène manœuvred upon Magdeburg (21 March) to give the Emperor time to arrive. The first of May, he rejoined Napoleon, and his troops took a decisive part in the

victory of Lutzen (2 May). On the 8th, he entered Dresden at the head of the advance-guard. Then, the Emperor, disquieted by the rumors of Murat's negotiations with the Austrians, ordered Eugène to return as quickly as possible to Milan.

At this time, as a token of his gratitude, the Emperor kept his promise, made several years before, and erected into a duchy, in favor of Eugène's eldest daughter, Joséphine, the territory of Galliera, belonging to the private Domain, and producing a revenue of 200,000 francs. It was a very small return for all the services of Eugène!

CHAPTER FORTY-SIX

APRIL — DECEMBER 1812

TOTTERING THRONES

JEROME — He Makes Catherine Regent during His Absence — Her Visit to Dresden — Napoleon's Criticisms of His Brother — Catherine Returns to Cassel — Her Anxiety about Jérôme — She Opposes His Return Home — Her Exalted Ideas of His Ability — Court Life after Jérôme's Arrival — His Prodigality — His Fidelity to Napoleon — The Emperor Calls on Him for Assistance

JOSEPH — He Assumes the General Command in Spain — His Confidence — The Forces in the Peninsula — Napoleon's Contradictory Orders — The Commanders Refuse to Obey the King — The English Army — Wellington Enters Spain — He Defeats Marmont at Salamanca — Occupies Madrid — Joseph Joined by Soult and Suchet — Madrid Reoccupied — Wellington Driven Out of Spain — Net Results of the Year's Campaign — Napoleon's Attitude toward Spain — He Writes Joseph No Letters during His Absence — His Criticism of the Peninsula Campaign

DURING the absence of Jérôme in Russia Catherine acted as regent, much against her will. When her husband first spoke to her on the subject, the last of March, she refused to accept the responsibility. "I feel," she said, "that I have neither the ability nor the experience." The King appealed to her sentiment of duty, and the Emperor approved of the plan, which was equivalent to a command. He wrote that he was pleased with "the mark of confidence given her by the King in leaving her the direction of affairs during his absence." He added that he did not see any objection to her coming to Dresden, and that he would be "charmed" to have her meet him there. This was a formal invitation; and, as none of the princesses of the Family was allowed to be present at the meeting, Catherine was overwhelmed.

Although Catherine was very feminine in her tastes, "living a tranquil, calm, peaceful life, with her reading, her work, and her music," she was naturally ambitious: she loved to be a

CATHERINE OF WÜRTEMBERG

queen, and aspired to a realm more vast than Westphalia. She was also influenced by her passion for Jérôme, and was ready to make any sacrifice to please him. While she found Westphalia very small, and badly formed for a kingdom, she was so thoroughly German in all her ideas that she could not sympathize with the ambition of Jérôme to obtain the crown of Poland. Her dream was that Frederick-Augustus might receive the throne of Poland, and Saxony be united to Westphalia — " which would make one of the finest kingdoms in Germany."

After the departure of the King, on the 6 April, Cassel was a dead city. All the chamberlains and all the écuyers had followed Jérôme. Catherine was very lonely: " the ministers told her nothing, and did as they pleased." She was no better posted regarding affairs than formerly, and perhaps even less. She passed her nights in tears, afflicted with the thought that she might lose " her darling husband " in this cursed war. The letters from Jérôme were rare, and she heard only occasionally from her father, who was sulky.

The middle of May, she had the diversion of the journey to Dresden, where she hoped to see her husband. En route, she made a visit at Weimar, where she was received with the greatest cordiality by the hereditary princess, who was born a grand-duchess of Russia. She reached Dresden at eleven o'clock on the night of the 17 May, forty-eight hours after her departure from Cassel. Fatigued from two sleepless nights, and nervous as the result of a ridiculous accident,[1] she was forced to mount the grand staircase, endure the presentations, the compliments, and the visits, while she pretended to be most amiable.

The following morning she was present at the *Toilette* of the Empress, and found the courage to beg the Emperor to allow Jérôme to come to Dresden. Napoleon was very friendly, but he replied: " Oh! oh! you are going to see how I will change the plans of one of the generals of my army for a woman." And poor Catherine, despite all her efforts to control her emotions, burst into tears.

[1] In descending from her carriage she broke the " cordons de ses pantalons," which fell around her feet, and nearly tripped her up at every step she took.

While at Dresden, Catherine was present at all the fêtes: no one could have been kinder to her than the Emperor Francis; and the Empress Béatrice honored her with particular attentions. Napoleon made her a visit of an hour and a half, and he was "very good and confidential with her," although somewhat put out because Jérôme had written her that there were rumors of the reunion of Westphalia to the Empire. The Emperor assured her that there was no truth in the reports. "Is it reasonable to suppose, my sister," he said, "that I would despoil my brother at the moment that he is making sacrifices for me, and that the country is bare of troops?"

But Napoleon was not so amiable on all occasions. Having received a letter from Jérôme, on the subject of the lamentable state of his finances, Catherine tried to bring the subject up with her august brother-in-law; but, at the first words, "Sire, I have had news of the King," the Emperor interrupted her: "I am much dissatisfied with the King; he is a child, who does not know how to command my armies." He then pointed out in detail all of Jérôme's sins of omission and commission, ending always with the phrase, so wounding to Catherine: "Look at the Viceroy and the King of Naples, there you find men, and generals!" He admitted that Jérôme had brains, but more was needed to make a good commander. "If this continues," he said in conclusion, "I shall be forced to deprive him of his command; then he will be dishonored, for I am not joking." With these words, he nodded to Catherine, and turned away, while she, as usual, began to cry.

There was nothing personal, however, in these remarks of the Emperor's: he simply wished Catherine to convey a warning to Jérôme, who, for his part, paid no attention to Napoleon's words. The Queen was also disturbed by the continued rumors at Dresden of the candidature of her husband for the throne of Poland, and she wrote Jérôme on the subject. Aside from her own reluctance to make the change, she pointed out, in a very statesman-like manner, the many difficulties connected with the new crown. Jérôme, whose mind was made up, was much offended; and he made no reply.

Prior to the Emperor's departure, he took a formal leave of all the Courts, speaking personally to each prince, queen, and princess. Although every one was naturally anxious, on the eve of so great a war, no one doubted the ultimate triumph, and not a voice was raised to put Napoleon on his guard.

Catherine remained several days at Dresden, to keep Marie-Louise company, and finally set out for Cassel on the 4 June, the same day that the Empress departed for Prague. Notwithstanding the deficit of thirty millions in the revenues of Westphalia for the preceding six months, she left behind her presents of truly royal munificence. On the 7 June, after three *nuits blanches*, she was back at her château of Napoleonshöhe, where she resumed her usual life.

Although, from love for her husband, she tried to keep in touch with affairs, she learned little or nothing from her ministers. Little by little she adopted a very retired life, awaiting news from the campaign, and the letters from Jérôme, which often did not come for a fortnight. Her existence was far from being a happy one.

When Jérôme wrote on the 30 June, "I hope that we shall be reunited soon," she took it for a touching phrase of gallantry, without for a moment thinking that such a dream could come true. She was still anxious regarding the perils which her beloved might run, for, "in such matters, the King is more daring than the Emperor"; and, in her mind's eye, she pictured Jérôme leading the charge of his squadrons upon a curvetting horse, as in his portrait by Gros. If she lost the being whom she loved the most in the world, what would be her existence in the future, as she had no child? The thought of such a fate overwhelmed her.

But these imaginary perils were soon succeeded by realities which rendered her even more anxious, not for the life, but for the good name of her husband. On the 20 July, she received Jérôme's letter of the 9th, in which he gave the pretext of an English descent as a motive for his early return. She at once replied, in a letter full of courage and good common-sense, begging Jérôme to remain, to be patient, and to retain his com-

posure. On the 25th, there came another letter from Jérôme, stating that his decision was final. Catherine replied, the following day, in a letter full of affection, in which she once more tried to dissuade her husband from his course. Jérôme, who had plenty of "brains," as the Emperor had said, responded in a letter setting forth his grievances, and using all the arguments which could best serve to touch the heart of his wife. He inveighed against the "despot," whose treatment of him was beyond words; against Poniatowski, Murat, and Eugène. Catherine was completely won over to Jérôme's point of view, and the prodigal received a very cordial welcome when he reached Cassel on the night of the 11 August, five days before he was expected. She thought that the Emperor had treated the King in an undeserved fashion: "The King was an embarrassment to him with the Army; the Emperor saw that he would have brilliant victories which might perhaps rival even his own"! The Emperor was jealous, and with good reason, for "the King has the same talent as the Emperor to arrange a plan of campaign"!! It has been well said that love is a form of madness.

With the return of the King, the Court resumed all of its former gaiety, for Jérôme had brought back with him the chamberlains, the écuyers, the aides de camp, and the ministers; only the soldiers and the generals remained with the Army. There were excursions and hunts, by day; dinners, balls, and special performances at the theatres, by night.

There was no limit to the prodigality of the King. As he still had in mind his coronation, so often adjourned, he ordered from Paris a royal diadem, at a cost of 40,000 francs, and negotiated the purchase of diamonds and pearls to the value of half a million francs. All of these gems, however, were not for the Queen. A month after the return of the King, all Cassel was talking discreetly of the three mistresses whom Jérôme was keeping at the same time: Mme. Escalon, his companion for the campaign; a Polish beauty, his only trophy from the war; and a certain German comtesse, a maid of honor of the Queen.

Despite the *Te Deum,* to celebrate the victory of Borodino, but little interest was shown in the affairs of the Grand Army. In the journal of the Queen hardly three lines are given to the two generals killed, four wounded, and one hundred and fifty other officers *hors de combat,* while more than five hundred lines are devoted to a scandal of the Court, of too ephemeral an interest to be recounted here. The Court also gave much attention to the intrigues over the appointment of a grand écuyer, to succeed Morio, and of a grand marshal in the place of Meyronnet.

One thing, however, must be said in favor of Jérôme: notwithstanding his letters to the Queen, and his diatribes against his brother, he was the only one in the Family, except Pauline, to remain always devoted and faithful to the Emperor. And his fidelity was attested, not only before the news of the débâcle was received, at the time the statue of the Emperor was unveiled on the 13 November, but also when the worst was known. As soon as he heard of the sudden appearance of Napoleon at Dresden, Jérôme wrote, on the 16 December, to express his desire " to go in person to present to him the expression of his tender and sincere attachment." Two days later, he sent one of his chamberlains to Paris, to convey to the Emperor his felicitations on the occasion of the New Year. At the same time he wrote: " I should be especially happy, Sire, if Your Majesty would permit me to go to assure you verbally of my tender and unchangeable attachment."

Napoleon had good reason to be dissatisfied with his brother; but this was not the time for recriminations. For the first time since Jérôme's departure from Warsaw, the Emperor wrote him: " At this moment I think that your presence is more useful in your kingdom than at Paris. In the Grand Army, nothing is left of the Westphalian contingent, and everything seems to announce a crisis for the coming spring. Let me know what you have sent to fill up your cadres; what you can do to complete your artillery and your cavalry; and finally what you are in state to do to provision and arm well Magdeburg against any eventuality." Jérôme replied that he would do everything " hu-

manly possible," and would be only too "happy if he could convince His Majesty that no one was more attached to him than himself."

As soon as he received the letter of the Major-General (Berthier), Joseph hastened to write the generals in command of the armies in Spain (3 April 1812): "The Emperor having confided to me the general command of his armies, I desire you to respond to his confidence in all that concerns the army which you command. Marshal Jourdan has been appointed by His Majesty my chief-of-staff." For Joseph, the semblance of power was all that he asked: he did not take into consideration the fact that his command was illusory so long as he had no right to appoint or dismiss the generals, and could modify neither the commands nor the territorial divisions. His self-confidence is shown in his letter of the 17 April: "The General-in-Chief," he wrote, "alone can sustain the King; and, in his turn, the King alone can conserve the military affairs in giving a single objective point to the peoples and to the army."

As nearly as he could conjecture, for detailed information was lacking, Joseph had under his orders (on paper) about 230,000 men: The Army of the South (Soult), 56,000; the Army of Portugal (Marmont), 52,000; the armies of Aragon and of Catalonia (Suchet and Decaen), 60,000; the Army of the North (Dorsenne, soon to be superseded by Caffarelli), 48,000; and the Army of the Centre, 12,000, under his own direct command. Having placed this imposing force of nearly a quarter of a million men at the disposition of his brother, who had never commanded even a regiment on the field of battle, how did the Emperor expect him to employ it? On this point, his instructions were singularly vague and contradictory. Through Berthier, on the 3 April, the Emperor wrote that there was no longer any foe in Spain except the British army; and that the offensive should be taken against this force. Considering the numerical inferiority of the Army of Portugal, this implied the reënforcement of Marmont by the other armies,

and the temporary abandonment of some of the occupied territory. On the other hand, through Clarke, the Minister of War, Napoleon gave orders, the first of May, to conserve the territory conquered, and extend it little by little. This would require the dispersal of the French forces, the neglect of the English army, and the direction of operations against the guerrillas, to keep open the communications with France. In both cases, the commanding generals should cease to act independently; they should mutually support each other, and carry out the orders of the King.

That the plans of the Emperor did not work out well, as might have been expected, is shown by a report of Jourdan two months later. The commander of the Army of the North had received contradictory orders, and did not understand that he was subject to the King; his forces were not large enough to hold the territory occupied, and keep open his communications. When Joseph ordered Suchet to send him a division to form a reserve for the Army of the Centre, that marshal replied that it was impossible for him to do so. To the orders of the King, he also opposed the instructions from the Prince de Neuchâtel, who had written that Catalonia was to be under his command. As for Soult, the communications were so interrupted that the King did not know the resources of the Army of the South, or even whether the marshal was aware that the Emperor had given the King the supreme command.

The Army of the Centre had been reënforced to 18,500 men, of whom 5800 were Spaniards. Joseph had built up his own personal command by detaining at Madrid recruits destined for the other armies. The Army of Portugal was reduced to hardly 52,000 men, and Marmont had neither supplies, nor means of transport, nor siege-cannon, all of his artillery having been taken at Ciudad Rodrigo. Marmont seems to have been the only one of the marshals who was at all willing to acknowledge the supremacy of the King.

Wellington had under his command an army of 60,000 men, partly English, but mostly mercenaries of all nations. If he could deal with either Soult or Marmont separately, he would

be in supreme force; but he was far inferior to both combined. However, these two marshals would not coöperate, both of them alleging, by way of excuse, orders from the Prince de Neuchâtel. The Army of the Centre was needed to insure the safety of the capital, and could not be used to strengthen either Soult or Marmont.

On the 19 May, an English force, under Hill, destroyed the bridge at Almaraz, thus breaking off the communications between Marmont and Soult, whereupon Wellington advanced with his main body against Salamanca. He seized this city toward the middle of June, and entrenched himself there. Marmont, whose army was reduced to about 30,000 men, fell back to the north of the Douro, where he hoped to be joined by Bonnat's division, 15,000 strong. Wellington now stood in force between Marmont and Joseph, who was advancing from Madrid with 20,000 men. About the middle of July, after being reënforced by Bonnat, but while Joseph was still some eight marches distant, Marmont assumed the offensive, for fear of having to serve under the King and Jourdan. In the battle of Salamanca (22 July), the French were defeated, and retreated to Burgos. Joseph, who had advanced to within four days of Salamanca, was forced to retire to Madrid. Wellington pursued Marmont for eight days, as far as Valladolid; then, lured by the prospect of capturing the capital, he turned back, and marched on Madrid, which he entered on the 13 August, three days after its evacuation by the King.

Marmont was severely wounded at Salamanca, and his successor, Clausel, attacked the pursuing column so vigorously at Burgos that Wellington, at the end of a fortnight, was compelled to leave Madrid, and return to the north. He attacked the fortress at Burgos, which was gallantly defended by the French; a month later, they resumed the offensive and again compelled him to retreat.

On leaving Madrid, Joseph joined Suchet near Valencia, which now became the chief base of the French. He ordered Soult to abandon Andalusia, and come to him with all his forces. Soult protested; but he finally raised the siege of

Cadiz, and fell back, through Granada to Almansa, where he rejoined the King.

On the 3 October, Soult advanced on Madrid, which was promptly evacuated by the British garrison, under Hill; and Joseph reëntered his capital without striking a blow. At this moment, Wellington was at Valladolid, about ninety-five miles away. The French forces in the North now compelled Wellington to retreat, and drove him across the Douro. He reached Arevalo early in November, and called Hill to rejoin him.

Later, Wellington once more advanced to Salamanca, where, as in July, he stood between two hostile forces; but his troops were so worn out by continual marching that he ordered a return to Portugal. Soult followed, and drove the British across the frontier in a state of great disorder. But his own forces, reduced to 60,000 men, were so weary that he stopped the pursuit, and both armies went into winter quarters.

On the whole, the results of the campaign of 1812 in Spain were favorable to the French: Andalusia had indeed been evacuated; but, on the other hand, Joseph had been restored to his capital, and Wellington driven across the Portuguese frontier. The Russian catastrophe changed the whole situation: a general advance into Portugal, or the reconquest of Andalusia, which certainly would have been justified at the close of 1812 by the conditions in Spain alone, had ceased to be possible. In preparation for the coming campaign in Saxony, the Emperor was forced in December to recall Soult and 30,000 men. This left Joseph only about 170,000 men, to confront Wellington with some 210,000 allied troops.[2]

When Napoleon left Paris in May 1812, he was still in a state of indecision regarding Spain, and was allowing matters to drift from day to day. He could not make up his mind to the only solution possible — the abdication of Joseph — and postponed further action until his return from Russia. He was not even fully decided as to the annexation of Catalonia, and seemed willing to guarantee the integrity of Spain, provided an

[2] See General von Horsetzky, *A Short History of the Chief Campaigns in Europe since 1792*, 244–248.

understanding could be reached with England. If no other solution were possible, he proposed to take the matter up himself: "His Majesty will go to Spain upon his return from Poland," wrote Berthier to Marmont, on the 16 April. With good fortune, he felt that Joseph could maintain his position during the summer.

Prior to his departure, Napoleon had accorded Joseph the three things that he demanded: the supreme command, sufficient troops, and an adequate supply of money. On the 16 April Berthier wrote: "The Emperor desires you to act with vigor, and to make yourself obeyed." In announcing new reënforcements, he said: "The French troops in Spain are very numerous, and Your Majesty has the power to direct them." As for money, Berthier stated: "The convoys of funds will arrive with exactitude from month to month." The Emperor also allowed Joseph a third of the contribution of fifty millions levied on Valencia, "which ought to give him about sixteen millions."

Nominally, therefore, the Emperor had met all the demands of Joseph; but in reality he had withheld certain powers essential to make the King's command effective. He had neglected to regulate Joseph's relations with the commanders of the several armies; he had given them a relative autonomy; and, without the knowledge of the King, he had detached two or three of the armies from the general command. In short, Napoleon had disregarded the old adage, to "trust all in all, or trust not at all"; and we have already seen how this divided responsibility wrecked all chances of French success in the Peninsula.

Having thus regulated matters, after a fashion, Napoleon left Joseph to work out the problem as best he could. From the day he left for Dresden (9 May) until the 22 December, four days after his return to Paris, the Emperor did not write Joseph a single letter.

But Napoleon gave orders, either directly or indirectly, to the generals under the nominal command of Joseph. From Dresden, on the 28 May, he instructed Clarke: "Write the Duc

de Raguse [Marmont] that the King will give him his orders"; but, at the same time, he goes into details, gives advice, outlines orders, sketches a complete plan of campaign; and he does the same in the case of several other generals. How then could the Emperor expect these commanders to pay any attention to the orders of the King?

As he became buried farther and farther in the depths of Russia, the instructions of the Emperor became rarer and briefer. The communications were so slow and so uncertain that on the 29 August Joseph had received no news, either from the Grand Army or from France, since the first of June. The Emperor himself was equally in the dark regarding the course of events in Spain. It was not until the eve of Borodino that he received the first report on the battle of Salamanca (22 July). Then he wrote the Minister of War: "At an opportune time you will let the Duc de Raguse know how indignant I am over his inexplicable conduct in failing to wait two or three days to be rejoined by the succors of the armies of the Centre and of the North."

On the 18 October, the eve of Napoleon's departure from Moscow, an aide de camp of Joseph's arrived with despatches from the King. At first, the Emperor refused to receive him, or to read the despatches; but he finally sent for the colonel, and questioned him closely. Then he criticized the operations in Spain: The movement of the Army of the Centre was made too late; it should have been made a month earlier; he himself had dictated the policy to pursue under such circumstances when, in 1808, he had left Madrid, without hesitation, to march against the English who had advanced to Valladolid.

These remarks to Colonel Desprez, the Emperor repeated clearly and precisely in a letter to Clarke, dictated the same day: "You will realize," he said, "that at this distance I can do nothing for the Armies of Spain. You should make known to the King and to the Duc de Dalmatie how little succor they can hope for, and how necessary it is, in their position, to act together, and diminish as much as possible the evils which a bad system has caused."

CHAPTER FORTY-SEVEN

FEBRUARY — DECEMBER 1812

THE EXILES

LOUIS — His Forebodings of the Russian Disaster — He Sends His "Protest" to the Czar — Disappointed at the Failure of His Novel — Changes His Physician — Statement of His Physical Condition — Again Thinks of Settling in America — Love for His Child — His Birthday Letter to the Little Napoleon — Advice to His Sister Pauline

LUCIEN — His Occupations in England — His Neglect by Society — His Literary Aspirations — His Two Poems — Plans for Their Publication — The Desbassyns Negotiations — Their Final Failure — Lucien's Overtures to the British Government — His Fortunes at the Lowest Ebb — He Writes His Version of the Mantua Interview

LOUIS appears to have been the sole member of the Family to foresee the failure of the Russian expedition. "He saw only too well," writes Van Capellen, "that it would conduct his brother to his ruin. He repeated this to me a hundred times, and the event proved that he was right." An act of Louis's at this time also shows that he had this foreboding. When M. de Thuil [1] came to Gratz, in February 1812, to visit his sister, Mme. Van Capellen, Louis placed in his hands, upon the assurance that it would be delivered direct to the Czar, his famous protest of the first of August 1810 against the annexation of Holland. His idea seems to have been that, after the débâcle, Alexander would consider favorably his claims to the throne.

At this time, Louis had broken off all communications with Decazes, except upon literary matters; but Madame and Fesch had found other intermediaries, and were still trying to induce him to return to France. "He was never willing to listen to their propositions," says Van Capellen; "he much preferred

[1] This M. de Thuil was a brother of Colonel de Thuil, who was in charge of the Russian Intelligence Department.

to be an exiled king, rather than to enjoy all the advantages which a residence in France could have offered him."

For several months, Louis was diverted by the publication of his book, *Marie, ou les peines de l'Amour,* which appeared in June 1812; also by the temporary relief which he thought that he had found in the new treatment of Dr. Speck. His reaction was therefore all the more painful, when his book was received in silence, and he finally realized that the *cure* was a failure. He consoled himself, however, with the thought that the magazines were commanded not to mention his volume — another "persecution." Having lost faith in the Austrian physicians, he returned to the French — among others Dr. Bouvier, whom he had consulted two years before. In his letter to this physician, Louis sets forth with the utmost frankness all of his morbid symptoms: "The right hand," he says, "is half-paralyzed; this does not increase, but does not improve, no matter what is done. In order to write, it is necessary to attach the pen to the fingers, and first cover the hand with a glove. The left hand becomes little by little without force. To turn a key, I have to put my fingers in the ring; without that, I cannot press hard enough to turn it; and this hand is the only one which is of any service." He continues: "For the past two years, I feel a kind of congestion in my head: it becomes heavy; it seems as though I were about to go mad. On awakening, or in talking, I am like a man in a dream: I have trouble in following my ideas. This rarely happens to me; but occasionally, especially during the evening." He then goes on to detail all the treatments he has tried, and demands a frank reply regarding twenty-four symptoms which he enumerates.

No specific for the malady of Louis was known a hundred years ago, and Dr. Bouvier could do no more than to suggest remedies which might relieve the august patient, and arrest the march of the paralysis. For the moment the disease seemed stationary, and there was no immediate danger of a fatal termination.[2]

[2] In fact, Louis, although always an invalid and a cripple, outlived all of the members of his family, except his youngest brother, Jérôme. He died in 1846, at the age of 68 years.

The mind of Louis was affected, as well as his body; but here, too, his malady was to remain nearly stationary — becoming neither better nor worse. He refused to return to France, but still talked of joining Lucien in America, and once more demanded the passports under the name of *Louis van Hol.* "If nothing can decide you to return to France," he wrote his brother, "make haste to leave a country which is an enemy to your own, and betake yourself to America. Above all, do not lose a moment to notify me, as soon as you are there, by the first boat which comes to Trieste. You may be sure, if you are already there, and if I have the assurance of being able to rejoin you, I will soon do it. You know America better than I do; select, I pray you, the most healthful climate, and the one most like that of France. For that, you need careful information. I believe that similar degrees of latitude have considerable differences of climate."

But Louis really had little idea of joining Lucien in America, despite his long and precise instructions. On the 25 October, he wrote his mother: "I have changed my mind; I am waiting; I am resigned, and what God pleases will arrive. If the very long letter, which my uncle wrote me from Aix, disturbed me; . . . if he did not convince me, he shook my resolution."

For more than a year, Hortense had refused to allow Louis any control over the life and the education of his son. This was a constant source of grief to the father. "I beg you," he wrote Madame, "to speak to Madame his mother, in order that he may be taken finally out of the hands of women. I am very reluctant to see him there: for more than a year I am tired of saying this without effect."

Nevertheless, Louis was so fond of this child that he even tolerated the presence of his governesses, and was gracious to them, much as he would have liked to see them dismissed. In fact, it was only through them that he received any reports regarding his son. When the boy had an attack of scarlatina, at Aix-la-Chapelle, it was Mme. de Mailly who kept him informed; Hortense did not write a word.

The warm paternal feelings of Louis are shown in a letter which he wrote Mme. de Boucheporn on the 6 December 1812: "Your letter of the 23 November has afforded me great pleasure, Madame, in giving me good news of the health of my son, and in telling me that in the future his letters will be the expression of his feelings, and only of himself. Nothing could be more agreeable to me and give me so much joy: you are entirely right in thinking so. I pray you to continue all your cares, and to be persuaded, as well as Mme. de Mailly, of my gratitude."

On the 11 October, the birthday of his son, he recalled this fact in letters to Pauline and to Madame; and he said to his mother: "I request you to make him a little present." To his son he wrote: "My dear child, I am writing you upon the anniversary of your birth to tell you that I am satisfied with you, that I love you, and that I thank God for having guarded you. You are now eight years old. I think with pleasure that, if you were with me, we could study and walk together. I was pleased with your last letter; I noticed in it a little weakness in your writing, but that was doubtless due to your convalescence. Where are you in your Latin? What do they have you learn? Does that amuse you? What pleases you most in your occupations? Adieu, mon ami, write me soon a fine long letter, entirely your own. I embrace you very tenderly."

In his letters, Louis also displays considerable affection for his family, especially Joseph, Lucien, and Pauline; and begs his mother to send him some news of them. In his letter of the 11 October to Pauline he wrote in the tone of a serious elder brother: "To-day," he said, "is my son's birthday: I am writing him a long letter. In a few days, it will be your own. Poor sister! You are approaching the end of your thirty-second year.[3] You are already old. Time presses for you to cure yourself and to be in good health, if you do not wish to suffer your life long. How is your hand? Do you ride? Why neglect this exercise?" This last question must have seemed senseless to Pauline, who could hardly endure a *chaise à porteurs!*

[3] Pauline was born the 20 October 1780.

Meanwhile, the head of Lucien, the other literary man of the Family, was full of divers schemes. He was awaiting the return of Boyer from Naples, with money for his journey to America; he was carrying on some mysterious negotiations with the British Government; he was sounding the Emperor on a project to exchange him against several English lords interned in France at the time of the rupture of the peace of Amiens; and last, but not least, he was looking for immortality as the result of the publication of his poems. In the seclusion of Thorngrove, but little information reached him from the outer world. His friend and illustrator, Chatillon, wrote at this time: "Since our arrival here, we have not been able to receive any news from France, and M. Lucien knows only by public reports that Madame Mère is in good health."

The society of Worcester no longer paid any attention to the illustrious exile. The regulations of the English Government were very severe, and none of the internes was allowed to go more than ten miles from Thorngrove in any direction. According to Chatillon, the peers and the Anglican clergy were forbidden to pay them any visits: "This was true English politeness," he writes; "but we were far from regretting this coldness, for the great majority of these gentlemen were very ignorant and very disagreeable."

Fortunately, Lucien was a poet. "Letters and the Arts are our sweet consolation," wrote Chatillon. "M. Lucien is just finishing his second poem: like Homer, he will have made his *Iliad* and his *Odyssey*. My glory will be attached to his own: thirty compositions will ornament the poem of *Charlemagne,* and twelve that of *La Cirnéide, ou la Corse héroïque*. . . . A time will come when our retreat will prove useful to us; and, without it, we should be far from being able to feel the beauties of literary work as we have learned to appreciate them in the meditation of retirement."

Convinced that his work would be of European importance, Lucien neglected nothing to secure the widest publicity. Through Miller, his London publisher, he entered into negotiations with a Paris house for a Continental edition. Two

London men of letters were working on an English translation, and a jury composed of the best English poets was to decide which version was preferable. Even such a celebrity as Lord Byron wrote his friend Tom Moore: "I pray you, do not give way, or this cursed Lucien Bonaparte will beat us all. I have read a large part of his poem in manuscript. Really, he surpasses everything inferior to Tasso." This was enough to turn a head more vain than that of Lucien.

At the same time, Lucien was pushing the negotiations for his exchange through the mediation of an enigmatic personage by the name of Desbassyns, whose movements are shrouded in much mystery. He first appeared in London, early in February 1811, with a passport signed by the hand of the Emperor himself. He seems to have had some relations with Lord Holland, and other leaders of the Opposition in the two Houses. He returned to France in December, and left again for England in February 1812, armed with another Imperial passport. On the 19 August, he wrote the Duc de Bassano, then at Vilna, on the subject of an exchange of prisoners. He said that he had had several conferences with Lord Melville, First Lord of the Admiralty, and claimed that he had much influence. Napoleon appears to have forgotten the man, for he returned the letter to Maret (21 September) with the marginal note: "What is this intriguer meddling with?" Later, the Emperor apparently recalled the passport, for he authorized Bassano to employ Desbassyns as secret agent to treat "all kinds of questions." Bassano had him come to Vilna; had a long talk with him, and sent him back to England by way of Sweden and Denmark.

In his different visits to England, Desbassyns appeared at Thorngrove. "This gentleman," wrote Alexandrine, "who, at Paris, was no more than a simple acquaintance of ours, came one day, and made us great offers of service." He pretended to be on intimate terms with the Imperial princesses; he professed great admiration for Lucien, and won "his very affectionate confidence." He also gained the confidence of the lady of the house, who intrusted to him a poem she had written on

Batilde, reine des Francs. Later, she accused him of betraying her secret to the Emperor, who ordered written, and paid for, a historical romance bearing the same title.

In February 1813, Desbassyns once more crossed the Channel upon a secret mission, which, whatever it may have been, failed signally through the publicity given to it by an article in the *Times* of the 22 February, denouncing the "underhanded negotiations of Buonaparte." It is unknown what services this secret agent may have rendered to the Emperor; but it is less difficult to appraise their probable value to the "Pretender"; for, in 1815, Louis the Eighteenth named him Baron de Richemont, and commissary general of the Île Bourbon, in anticipation of his appointment as member of the Council of the Admiralty, counsellor of State, and comte.[4]

Lucien does not seem to have been mixed up with these secret negotiations; but, on the 6 August 1812, he wrote Lord Castlereagh to propose, in case of peace between France and England, a secret treaty with Joseph, guaranteeing the complete independence of Spain, as regards France. He stated that he was convinced that Joseph would be delighted to be delivered from the domination of Napoleon; and, to conduct the negotiations, he offered the services of Chatillon, whom "he considered as a member of his family."

These new overtures of Lucien to the English Government were not in any way connected with the approaches made by Napoleon on the 17 April, which were peremptorily rejected six days later, on the old ground that Joseph would never be recognized as King of Spain. For reasons of its own, this time the British Cabinet apparently held out some hopes to Lucien, for he followed the matter up in two further letters; and the negotiations were not formally broken off until the first of November, when the failure of the Russian expedition had definitely settled the fate of Napoleon.

At this time, in the autumn of 1812, the fortunes of Lucien were at their lowest ebb: the banker Torlonia, to whom he had pledged his property in Italy, was threatening to sell Canino;

[4] See 7 Masson, 413–418.

Louis had refused to aid him; and he had lost all hopes either of being exchanged or of finding a refuge in America. It was at this period that he wrote the chapter in his *Mémoires* giving his erroneous version of the interview with his brother at Mantua.

CHAPTER FORTY-EIGHT

MAY 1812 — JANUARY 1813

THE WOMEN BONAPARTES

PAULINE — The Princesses during the Emperor's Absence — Pauline Visits Aix-les-Bains — Her New Admirer, Duchand — She Hears of the Death of Canouville — She Leaves for Marseille — MADAME — Her Family Letters — Her Interest in Their Affairs — Her Indifference to the Malet Conspiracy — Visits from Her Grandchildren — HORTENSE — She Visits Aix-la-Chapelle — Her Portrait by Mme. de Rémusat — Her Anxiety over Her Son's Illness — Napoleon's Sympathy — Attitude of the Rest of the Family — Intimacy of Hortense and Marie-Louise — The Empress's Letter to the Duc de Berg — Hortense and the Malet Conspiracy — Fine Attitude of the Beauharnais — ELISA — Her Firm Administration — Her Painting by Benvenuti — Her View of the Russian Disaster — CAROLINE — She Is Made Regent at Naples — Her Wise Government — The French Troops Withdrawn — Murat Announces His Return — Caroline's Strong Letter — Her Position at This Time

DURING the absence of the Emperor in Russia there was but little change in the general life of the people at home in France. From time to time, when a new Bulletin was received, the bells were rung, salvos of artillery were fired, and *Te Deums* were chanted in the churches, but they aroused no enthusiasm. The nation was surfeited with victory, and looked forward with indifference to the usual triumphant ending of the campaign. Only those whose hearts were attached to the soldiers of the Grand Army were tormented with fears or anxiety.

In the Imperial Family, the feeling was the same as in society, and among the common people. Although their fortunes were bound up with those of the Emperor, not one seems to have realized the fragility of the Imperial edifice, or to have felt any particular inquietude. The Bonaparte princesses followed their own bents, each one according to her character or

inclinations. Left to themselves, without the guidance of the master-hand, they showed how worthless they really were.

The first week in June, Pauline started for Aix-les-Bains, which she had so often visited on the pretext of ill-health; but this time she undoubtedly was far from well. Instead of taking with her the greater part of her Maison, and a large collection of toilettes and jewels, she was accompanied by a very modest suite, and limited herself to a few simple gowns and her plainest gems. As if by a kind of presentiment, on the eve of her absence, which she knew was to be long, but which she little imagined was to be eternal,[1] she put all of her affairs in order.

That summer, it was the fashion for the grand monde to go to Aix-en-Savoie, and the resort had never been so crowded with bathers and drinkers of the waters. Among the visitors during the season were: the Empress Joséphine; Julie, the wife of King Joseph, of Spain; her sister, Désirée, the wife of Bernadotte, now the crown-prince of Sweden; Madame Marmont, Duchesse de Raguse; Madame Junot, Duchesse d'Abrantès; and a crowd of other personages distinguished by their social positions. Nearly every one had relations or friends with the Grand Army in Russia, or with the forces in Spain; but no echoes of the wars troubled this tranquil scene, where the visitors were lulled by the calm which so often precedes the storm.

On her arrival, Pauline was too ill to take part at first in any of the picnics, balls, and other fêtes, which were organized by her friends. She passed her days, extended upon her chaise-longue, dressed in an elegant demi-toilette of Indian muslin, receiving her visitors with a languid smile, and talking only of diet and medical treatment.

Soon, however, her health began to improve. This may have been due to her baths; the milk diet prescribed by her physicans; perhaps to the delightful climate of the mountains; but

[1] Although Pauline still had thirteen years of life before her, she never saw Paris again.

probably the presence of a new adorer had something to do with her improvement. This was Auguste Duchand, one of the most brilliant officers in the Artillery, who had recently returned from Spain to nurse a wound received at Valencia, which had nearly cost him his life. He was a handsome man of about thirty years of age, with a reputation of dashing courage, and he was received with open arms by the high society of Aix.

That "little pest," Madame d'Abrantès, tells us in her *Mémoires* that he was at once taken into high favor by Pauline, but this is by no means certain. The commandant was very much smitten with the charms of the princess, but her heart was still true to Canouville, for whom she had just ordered made at Paris a magnificent sabre, with the hilt ornamented with diamonds.

Madame, and her brother, Cardinal Fesch, arrived at Aix about the middle of July, and remained for a month. Joséphine came the last of September, but Pauline saw very little of her: there never had been much sympathy between them. At this time, nearly all of the other members of the family had taken their departures, and Duchand alone remained to keep Pauline company.

On the 27 September, with the news of the victory of Borodino (7 September), there came the announcement of the death of Canouville. M. de Saluces, who accompanied the Emperor as écuyer, wrote Pauline's intendant, David: "The details which the journals will give you will bring grief to your soul, as they will cause despair to a high and powerful dame. Canouville is no more: covered with blood, I found upon his breast a portrait whose striking resemblance would have betrayed and compromised the original. I alone saw it and destroyed it." [2] Pauline, who was anxious because she had received no letters recently, was the only person who was ignorant of the fate of Canouville, and no one dared to write her, or to tell her. Finally, some one found the courage to inform the princess that she would find news in a journal of a certain date. Pauline was over-

[2] Cited 7 Masson, 381.

whelmed with grief: she passed her days in tears; she lost her appetite, and her health was visibly affected.

Pauline's physicians had ordered her to pass the winter in a warm climate, and not to return to Paris before the spring of 1813. She left Aix finally on the 28 October, by Lake Bourget, and arrived the following day at Lyon, where she made a short visit to her uncle. On the 6 November, she was at Tarascon, "very tired and much changed"; three days later she arrived at Marseille, where she took up her residence.

Duchand followed Pauline to the South, but when he applied for an extension of his congé, on the plea that he was not yet fit for duty, he met with a curt refusal, and received orders from the Emperor to join the Grand Army immediately.[3]

On her return from Aix, the first of September, Madame spent a few days in Paris, where she received a visit of ceremony from Marie-Louise. Two days later, she dined with the Empress at Saint-Cloud. Then Madame went to her summer home at Pont, where she remained until the end of October. Although she never wrote a letter with her own hand, Madame kept up a very voluminous correspondence with all the members of the Family. Not a week passed without letters to Joseph, at Madrid; to Julie, at Mortefontaine; to Lucien, at Thorngrove; to Louis, at Gratz; to her brother, at Lyon; and to her three daughters, at Florence, Aix, and Naples. In fact, she was the connecting link between all the members of the Family, and kept each one fully informed of the doings of the others. Nor was she content with being merely a purveyor of social gossip: she was interested in all the affairs of her children. For example, she wrote Louis on the subject of Bylandt: "Regarding your aide de camp, I am unable to give you information fuller than that contained in my previous letters. He has left for the army in the quality of chief of the general staff of a general whom I do not know. He seemed to me happy to have

[3] He took part in the Saxon Campaign, and greatly distinguished himself at Bautzen and Leipzig: the Emperor rewarded his services with the golden eagle of the Légion d'honneur, and the title of baron of the Empire.

obtained this place; in truth, he was very downcast at that moment, although Paulette and I had come to his succor more than once." This is only one illustration among a thousand.

In Corsica, the wishes of Madame and Fesch were the supreme law. The prefect, Arrighi, the father of the Duc de Padoue, followed their orders in every respect, and no official was named without their approval. She had also her duties as Protectrice des Sœurs Hospitalières de Paris; but here she was aided by Decazes, who had become her private secretary in March 1812.

Madame returned to Paris for the winter on the 27 October, four days after the attempt of Malet, of which she seems to have understood nothing. "You have read in the papers," she wrote Louis, "the news of the émeute, or rather the farce, which took place in Paris on the 23d. I was not yet there. The culprits are paying for their folly with their lives, and all is calm and tranquil in the capital, as well as in all the rest of the Empire."

Madame resumed her usual quiet life: she went to Saint-Cloud to see the King of Rome, and to Mortefontaine to visit Julie, who had not been very well since her return from Aix. On the 18 November, she had the Empress for dinner, before the performance at the Français. She was also much interested in her grandchildren, the sons of Louis, and found them very well, when Hortense sent them to visit her from Saint-Leu. "As usual," she wrote Louis, "Napoleon talked constantly of you. I cannot begin to tell you how he becomes more and more interesting every day."

In May 1812, Hortense had a short visit from Joséphine. After her mother's departure, she left the last of the month for Aix-la-Chapelle. She was accompanied by her two sons, a chamberlain, and two of her ladies, Mme. de Broc and Mlle. Cochelet. Despite the rainy season that year, Hortense enjoyed her visit to Aix. She met there: Mme. de Rémusat, and her sister, Mme. de Nansouty; Mme. Lavalette; and the wife of Marshal Ney, who was a sister of Mme. de Broc.

In a letter to her husband, Mme. de Rémusat draws a very attractive sketch of Hortense at this time. "In speaking of the Queen," she says, "I cannot begin to tell you what charm I find in the intimacy of her society. She has really an angelic character, and a personality wholly different from what people imagine. . . . She is so true, so pure, so entirely ignorant of evil; there is such a sweet sadness in the bottom of her soul; she seems so resigned to the future, that it is impossible not to derive from her a very particular impression. Her health is not bad; she is bored by the rain, because she loves to walk; she reads a great deal, and appears to desire to repair her lack of education along certain lines." [4]

The first week in July, the little Napoleon had an attack of scarlatina, and for two days was seriously ill. Hortense was very anxious, for this sudden illness recalled vividly to her mind the death of her first child five years before. She took care of the boy herself; watched by his bedside night and day, and was not reassured until all danger was passed. She did not write Louis, but he was kept informed by daily letters from the governess. Next to the King of Rome, this child was the presumptive heir to the Empire, and daily bulletins were sent to the Emperor in Russia. From Vitepsk, on the 29 July, Napoleon wrote Hortense: "My daughter, I have been distressed to learn by your letter of the 12th that Napoleon was ill, and I have heard with pleasure by your letter of the 14th that he was out of danger. I had counted upon this quick recovery, knowing how much a mother is prompt to take alarm."

This letter from the Emperor, although not very warm, was in marked contrast with the total lack of interest shown by the other members of the Family, who did not seem to care what became of the second heir to the Imperial throne. Even the grandmother, Madame Mère, who had seemed to love the child, spoke of his illness in terms of indifference, and showed none of the tenderness which she had displayed when Élisa lost her little son. The divorce of Joséphine had not healed the breach between the Bonapartes and the Beauharnais, and the child was

[4] Cited 7 Masson, 389–390.

little loved, on account of his mother, who kept him with her. The attitude of Marie-Louise was very different from that of the Bonapartes. She seems to have been very fond of Hortense from the first. When the Queen left Aix for Spa, to complete the convalescence of the little prince, the Empress did not forget his fête-day and wrote him this charming letter:

" My dear nephew, I do not wish to let this day pass without writing you to offer my sincere felicitations upon your fête. It would be impossible for me to tell you all the good wishes that I form for you, they would be too numerous. I feel sure that you will continue to be the consolation of your good mama in becoming every day more amiable and more sober-minded. I have been delighted to learn that you are entirely well. I await with impatience the moment of your return, to assure you of all my friendship. I am sending you a case of playthings which I hope will amuse you. My health, as well as that of your little cousin, is good. Speak sometimes to mama of a sister who tenderly loves her. I shall not write her to-day, for I am very tired after all the receptions. I will do so to-morrow. Give Louis a good kiss for me, and believe in the tender attachment of your very loving aunt."

This very affectionate letter, from an aunt to a little nephew of eight years, is quite different from the usual formal letters of Marie-Louise to the members of the Family, and shows a strong attachment to Hortense. The intimacy of the two sisters-in-law was also shown by their frequent interchanges of visits after the return of the Queen. Hortense went at once to Saint-Cloud, and visited there at least as often as once a week. On the 29 August and the 6 September, Hortense dined with the Empress; and on the 14th Marie-Louise passed the entire day at Saint-Leu. On the 3 October, Marie-Louise wrote: " My dear sister, I shall be much pleased to have you dine with me to-morrow. Since your arrival, I have not had the opportunity to see you alone a single time, and to express to you all the tender friendship that I feel for you. . . . I beg you to believe in all the tender attachment which your sister has devoted to you for life."

Hortense was apparently the only one of the Family to appreciate the significance of the Malet conspiracy. As soon as she heard of the attempt, she ordered her carriage and hastened to Saint-Cloud. She wrote her brother: "I was anxious to embrace the poor little King of Rome, whom I found very well. The Empress was wonderful, and believed that it was merely an affair of brigands. Fortunately she had no fears for her son. She told me that she would come to-morrow to pass the day with me at Saint-Leu."

Returning to the plot, Hortense says: "There is no doubt that they would have been ready to seize the King of Rome — that makes me tremble. My own little plan was to send my children to the nearest fortified city, like Péronne. I should have tried to conduct there the King, the Empress; and, by purchasing quantities of corn, to shut myself up in the city, and wait until they came to rescue us." In these words, Hortense displays, not only her courage, but a true estimate of the situation. She had been in Paris when the Tuileries were stormed on the 10 August, and when the Directory was overthrown on the 18 Brumaire; she had witnessed one coup d'état follow another; she realized how little solidarity there was in a throne; and how an uprising, at which one laughs to-day, may become to-morrow an insurrection which overthrows everything in its path. With her legitimate fears, she shows a devotion to the Imperial dynasty in which self plays no part. She never stops to think that, with the disappearance of the King of Rome, her own son would be the heir to the throne. Joséphine also displayed the same self-abnegation: as soon as she heard the news, she wished to rush, with her daughter, "to join Marie-Louise and the King of Rome." This crisis at the end of the year 1812, which called forth the real qualities of the friends of Napoleon, showed the Beauharnais in the attitude of brave persons, with a feeling of duty, of gratitude for favors received, and of forgetfulness of their own personal interests.

Fearing a descent of the English on Italy during his absence, Napoleon had taken precautions to guard the most vulnerable

points — Venice, Genoa, Rome, Ancona, and Naples. His orders were very faithfully executed by his sister Élisa; but the enemy did not appear in any quarter. The summer of 1812 passed tranquilly, although the failure of the harvest of the previous autumn, and the burden of the Continental System, were causing great misery everywhere in Tuscany. There were no signs, as in 1805 and 1809, of preparations for an uprising. This peaceful condition, Élisa attributed to her renown as a just ruler, and the firmness of her administration.

The Grand-Duchess found the moment propitious to protect the Arts, and had herself painted by Benvenuti, surrounded by the ladies of her Court, the principal officers of her Household, and some of her artistic and literary protégés. Here we see Santarelli and Morghen; her little daughter, the Princesse Napoléone; her lover Cenami, whose star is paling, and the rising star, young Lucchesini; Prince Félix, in rapt admiration before the bust of his spouse, with the sculptor, Canova, by his side; and finally, partly concealed behind the bust, the painter Benvenuti himself.[5]

The news of the Russian disaster, which reached Élisa in December, does not seem to have caused her much inquietude, for we find her writing the Emperor on Christmas day to felicitate him on his safe return, and to assure him that no part of the Grand-Empire was more submissive or more tranquil than Tuscany. If she had any apprehensions, she did not permit them to interfere with her plans for the embellishment of her palace at Lucca; and she invested 220,000 francs of her savings in the estate of Campignano, which she purchased of the Manzi family, and which she improved.

As soon as the Emperor departed for Dresden, on the 9 May, Murat and Caroline moved from Saint-Cloud to the Pavillon de Flore in the Tuileries. Here, on the 12th, before he left for

[5] This painting, which is reproduced in the work of Paul Marmottan, was purchased by Napoleon the Third in 1857, from the Pepoli family, and hung for many years in the Tuileries. It was long believed to have been destroyed in the fire of 1871, but some years ago it was disovered in the Garde-Meuble.

CAROLINE BONAPARTE

Cassel, Murat signed the royal decree by which he conferred the regency on Caroline and confided the general command of the troops to Marshal Pérignon. Caroline was much pleased with the arrangement, but she bore her honors modestly.

Before leaving Paris, the Emperor returned to Murat a regiment of cavalry and one of infantry, from the Neapolitan division on its march to join the Grand Army, "in order to enfeeble less the forces of the interior." General Grenier, strengthened by two batteries of artillery, was directed to keep his forces united, so as to march at need upon Rome, Ancona, or Venice, if those points were menaced. With the cadres returning from Spain, and including the corps of Grenier, Pérignon would have at his disposal 50,000 infantry, 4000 cavalry, and 60 or 70 pieces of artillery.

Leaving the Tuileries at nine o'clock on the evening of the 15 May, and stopping for a day or two en route at Lyon, Turin, Florence, and Rome, Caroline entered Naples on the afternoon of the 2 June "in the midst of an immense crowd and universal acclamations."

Caroline would have been entirely satisfied with her situation, if Murat had given her a free hand, and if "he had not reserved the decision upon all governmental questions." But, under these conditions, she set herself to work. Up to now, we have seen Caroline a coquette, adroit and intriguing; employing every means, with mediocre results, to advance the fortunes of her husband, to which her own were linked. We have seen her lending her good offices to her brother in the search for mistresses; and even giving herself, less from temperament than from calculation, to those who might be able to serve her. Now we behold Caroline upon another theatre, in an entirely different rôle, and she is no longer the same woman.

The conditions at Naples were very difficult: the Treasury was empty; the Observation Corps absorbed the resources; the Neapolitan contingent to the Grand Army must be paid; prior to the arrival of the cadres from Spain, the new levies could not be organized. Caroline comprehends all, and undertakes all. "She makes a noble apprenticeship in government,"

writes her friend Norvins; "she brings to affairs an enlightened devotion, and the determination never to separate the interests of the Kingdom from those of the Empire." She becomes a woman of affairs; she works, she writes, in the manner of the Emperor; she is no longer ill; and she has no further need of lovers. "The application which she brings to the affairs of the Kingdom appears to increase her powers: it is a family characteristic," writes Norvins. This phrase, which seems that of a courtier, is no more than the simple truth.

The middle of September, Grenier received an order to march with his troops to Verona, where he would form a division of three brigades (one Italian and two French, withdrawn from Naples), which he would lead to the Oder. Through the needs of the Emperor, Murat at last had gained his point. These troops were to enable Eugène to hold the Russians in check; but Naples was lost. So long as even a battalion of French soldiers remained in the kingdom, the defection of Murat was impossible: now he had a free field.

Toward the middle of October, there were rumors at Naples of the early return of the King. The reports were not definite or official, but appeared so probable that his arrival was looked for from day to day. But it was a false alarm: Murat had taken his hopes for realities; and he feared the Emperor too much to make any attempt to desert the army, while Napoleon was there. Then, suddenly, came the Twenty-ninth Bulletin, with the news of the disaster; and three letters from Murat, announcing his determination to return home at once.

On receipt of Murat's letters from Königsberg, declaring his intention, no matter what came of it, to leave the Grand Army to its fate, Caroline at once sent him a letter showing genuine good sense and an accurate view of the situation:

Mon ami, I have just received by estafette your three letters of the 25th, 26th, and 27th. I am bound to confess that they have made me dreadfully unhappy. Would you have me believe that you could surrender to another the glorious rôle of aiding the Emperor to crush his enemies, or that you could

commit an act so wild as to leave the army before the Emperor had fixed on your successor? Do you mean to say that you would come away now, after six months of toil, and when the worst time of the year is over. No, that I feel sure you never will do. Be of good heart, mon ami. You would never forgive yourself if you gave up the victory to another. You assisted with all your might to bring about the initial successes of the Emperor; but that is not enough so long as the final issue remains in doubt. A few days more and the Emperor will be with you again with fresh troops. Then will come victory and peace. Your bravery will have helped to bring it about. Your happiness and mine too will be doubly great. Doubt not that I long for your return if it could be brought about without prejudice to your future happiness; but I know your heart too well; I am too well aware of your affection for the Emperor, as well as for your own interests, to imagine that your mind could be at peace if he were displeased with you. Therefore, take heart again. I know what your sufferings must be. I share your trials and troubles; but I conjure you, by the glory which you prize so highly; I conjure you, I say, to continue to endure them. It will not be for long, I trust. Adieu, mon ami.[6]

Even if it had been received in time, this letter would not have deterred Murat from his course: his mind was absolutely decided. But it is only just to give Caroline the credit for having written it. At this moment, she realized that self-interest was in accord with duty, and she expressed her thoughts with true eloquence.

At this time, Caroline was in harmony with her husband in desiring the emancipation of her crown; but she still adhered to the French system, as opposed to the Italian, of which she foresaw the disastrous consequences; and she as yet knew nothing of the scheme for an Austrian entente, into which Murat had entered during his absence, and into which she herself was almost insensibly to be drawn at a later date.

[6] Naples, 15 January 1813. (*Affaires Étrangères.*)

APPENDIX

THE BONAPARTES

Genealogical Table

Biographical Notes

TITLES CONFERRED BY NAPOLEON

THE BONAPARTES

GENEALOGICAL TABLE

I	II	III	IV	V
1 Charles Bonaparte	2 Joseph			
	3 Napoleon I	7 Napoleon II		
	4 Lucien	8 Charles	15 Joseph	
			16 Lucien	
			17 Charles	
		9 Louis Lucien		
		10 Pierre	18 Roland	
	5 Louis	11 Napoleon Charles		
		12 Napoleon Louis		
		13 Napoleon III	19 Prince Imperial	
	6 Jerome	14 Prince Napoleon	20 Victor	22 Louis
			21 Louis	

Compiled by the Author

THE BONAPARTE FAMILY

First Generation

1. Charles Bonaparte, born at Ajaccio, Corsica, 29 March, 1746; died at Montpellier, France, 24 February, 1785; married 2 June, 1764, Letitia Ramolino, born at Ajaccio, 24 August, 1750; died at Rome, 2 February, 1836. Children: (2) Joseph, (3) Napoleon, (4) Lucien, (5) Louis, (6) Jérôme, Elisa, Pauline, Caroline.

Second Generation

2. Joseph, King of Spain, born at Corte, Corsica, 7 January, 1768; died at Florence, 28 July, 1844; married 1 August, 1794, Julie Clary, born 26 December, 1771. No sons.
3. Napoleon I, Emperor of the French, born at Ajaccio, 15 August, 1769; died at Saint Helena, 5 May, 1821; married, 1st, 9 March, 1796, Joséphine de Beauharnais, born at Trois-Ilets, Martinique, 23 June, 1763; died at Malmaison, 29 May, 1814; divorced, 1809; married, 2d, 11 March, 1810, Marie-Louise, born at Vienna, 12 December, 1791; died at Vienna, 18 December, 1847. Son: (7) Napoleon II.
4. Lucien, Prince of Canino (in Italy), born at Ajaccio, 21 May, 1775; died at Viterbo, Italy, 30 June, 1840; married, 1st, 4 May, 1794, Catherine Boyer, by whom he had two daughters; married, 2d, 23 October, 1803, Alexandrine de Bleschamp (Madame Jouberthou). Children: (8) Charles, (9) Louis Lucien, (10) Pierre, and two other sons and four daughters.
5. Louis, King of Holland, born at Ajaccio, 2 September, 1778; died at Leghorn, Italy, 25 July, 1846; married 4 January, 1802, Hortense de Beauharnais, born at Paris, 10 April, 1783; died at Arenenberg, Switzerland, 5 October, 1837.

Children: (11) NAPOLEON CHARLES, (12) NAPOLEON LOUIS, (13) LOUIS NAPOLEON (NAPOLEON III).

6. JÉRÔME, King of Westphalia, born at Ajaccio, 15 November, 1784; died near Paris, 24 June, 1860; married, 1st, 24 December, 1803, Elizabeth Patterson, of Baltimore, born 6 February, 1785; died 4 April, 1879; one son: JEROME NAPOLEON, born at Camberwell, England, 7 July, 1805; died at Baltimore, 17 June, 1870. He had two sons: JEROME NAPOLEON, born at Baltimore, 5 November, 1832; died at Pride's Crossing, Mass., 4 September, 1893; and CHARLES JOSEPH, born at Baltimore, 9 June, 1851; died at Bella Vista, near Baltimore, 28 June, 1921. The former left a son of the same name (b. 1878); the latter had no children. King JÉRÔME married, 2d, 22 August, 1807, after the annulment of his first marriage, Princess Catherine of Würtemberg, born 21 February, 1783. Children: JÉRÔME NAPOLEON, Prince de Montfort, born 24 August, 1814; died 12 May, 1847; (14) NAPOLEON JOSEPH, and Mathilde, born at Trieste, 27 May, 1820; died at Paris, 2 January, 1904; married Prince Demidov.

ELISA, Grand Duchess of Tuscany, born at Ajaccio, 3 January, 1777; died near Trieste, 6 August, 1820; married 1 May, 1797, Félix Bacciochi (b. 1762).

PAULINE, Princesse Borghèse, born at Ajaccio, 20 October, 1780; died at Florence, 9 June, 1825; married, 1st, 14 June, 1797, General Leclerc (1772–1802); married, 2d, 28 August, 1803, Prince Borghèse.

CAROLINE, Queen of Naples, born at Ajaccio, 25 March, 1782; died at Florence, 18 May, 1839; married 20 January, 1800, General JOACHIM MURAT, who became King of Naples in 1808. He was born 25 March, 1771 (? 1767); executed in Italy, 13 October, 1815. Children: NAPOLEON ACHILLE, born 21 January, 1801; died 15 April, 1847; married Caroline Dudley; and NAPOLEON LUCIEN CHARLES, born 16 May, 1803; died 10 April, 1878; married, 1827, Georgiana Fraser, by whom he had three sons: JOACHIM (1834–1901), ACHILLE (1847–1895), and LOUIS (1851–).

Third Generation

7. Napoleon II, King of Rome, Duke of Reichstadt, born at Paris, 20 March, 1811; died at Vienna, 22 July, 1832. Never married.
8. Charles, born at Paris, 24 May, 1803, died at Paris, 29 July, 1857, married at Brussels, 29 June, 1822, his cousin Zénaïde, born 8 July, 1801, died 8 August, 1854, daughter of King Joseph, by whom he had three sons and five daughters. The branch is now extinct.
9. Lucien Louis, born at Thorngrove, England, 4 January, 1813; died 3 November, 1891; married; left no children.
10. Pierre, born at Rome, 12 September, 1815; died at Versailles, 7 April, 1881; married 3 November, 1867, Justine Eléonore Ruffin, by whom he had, before his marriage, two children: (18) Roland and Jeanne. In January, 1870, he killed Victor Noir.
11. Napoleon Charles, born at Paris, 10 October, 1802; died at The Hague, 5 May, 1807.
12. Napoleon Louis, born at Paris, 11 October, 1804; died at Forli, Italy 17 March, 1831; married his cousin, Charlotte, (1802–1839) daughter of King Joseph. No children.
13. Napoleon III, Emperor of the French, born at Paris, 20 April, 1808; died at Chislehurst, near London, 9 January, 1873; married 30 January, 1853, Eugénie de Montijo, born at Granada, Spain, 5 May, 1826; died at Madrid, 11 July, 1920. One son: (19) Napoleon Louis, the Prince Imperial.
14. Napoleon Joseph, called Prince Napoleon, born at Trieste, 9 September, 1822; died at Rome, 17 March 1891; married in January, 1859, Princess Clotilde, daughter of King Victor Emmanuel. Children: (20) Victor, (21) Louis, and Marie Lætitia born 20 December, 1866, who married in September, 1888, her maternal uncle Amadeus, Duke of Aosta, ex-King of Spain, and brother of King Humbert of Italy, by whom she had one son, Humbert, born in 1889.

Fourth Generation

15. Joseph, Prince of Canino, born at Philadelphia, 13 February, 1824; died 1865; left no heirs.
16. Lucien, Cardinal Bonaparte, born at Rome, 15 November, 1828; died in 1895.
17. Charles, born 5 February, 1839, died in 1899; married 26 November, 1859, the Princess Ruspoli, by whom he had two daughters, born in 1870 and 1872.
18. Roland, born 19 May, 1858; married 7 November, 1880, Marie Blanc, the daughter of the proprietor of the gambling establishment at Monte Carlo. She died 1 August, 1882, leaving him one daughter and an enormous fortune. His daughter, Marie, in 1907, married Prince George, second son of King George of Greece.
19. Napoleon Louis, the Prince Imperial, born at Paris 16 March, 1856; killed in Zululand, South Africa, 1 June, 1879. Never married.
20. Napoleon Victor, Prince Napoleon, present head of the Bonaparte family, born at Paris, 18 July, 1862; married 14 November, 1910, the Princess Clémentine, born 1872, daughter of Leopold II, King of the Belgians. She is a cousin of the present King Albert; two children: Clotilde, born at Brussels, 20 March, 1912, and (22) Louis Napoleon, born at Brussels, 23 January, 1914.
21. Louis Napoleon, born at Paris, 16 July, 1864. He was a General of Cavalry in the Russian Army, and, in 1906, Governor of the Caucasus. Never married.

Fifth Generation

22. Louis Napoleon, son and heir of Prince Napoleon, born at Brussels, 23 January, 1914.

ADDENDA

2. JOSEPH had three daughters: (*a*) Julie, born at Genoa in April 1796; died young; (*b*) Zénaïde, born at Paris 8 July 1801; died 8 August 1854; married (8) CHARLES; (*c*) Charlotte, born at Mortefontaine 31 October 1802; died at Sarzana 2 March 1839; married at Florence 23 July 1826 (12) NAPOLEON-LOUIS.

4. LUCIEN had six daughters (two by his 1st wife and four by his 2d): (*a*) Charlotte, born at Saint-Maximin 22 February 1795; married Prince Gabrielli; (*b*) Christine-Égypta, born at Paris 19 October 1798; married (1) Count Arved Posse; (2) Dudley Coutts Stuart; (*c*) Letitia, born at Milan 1 December 1804; married Thomas Wyse; (*d*) Jeanne, born 22 July 1807; married Marquis Honorati; (*e*) Marie, born 10 October 1818; died 20 August 1874; married Count Valentini; (*f*) Constance, born 30 January 1823; died 4 September 1876; abbess of Convent of Sacré-Cœur, at Rome. Lucien had two other sons, neither of whom left descendants: PAUL (1808–1827) and ANTOINE (1816–1877).

ÉLISA had four children: (*a*) Napoléon, born 6 June 1798; died January 1799; (*b*) Napoléone-Élisa, born 6 June 1806; married (1825) Count Camerata; had one son who committed suicide in 1853; (*c*) Jérôme-Charles, born 1810; died 1811; (*d*) Frédéric, born 1814; died 1833. No descendants now living.

PAULINE had by her 1st husband (General Leclerc) one son, Dermide, born 20 April 1798; died 14 August 1804.

CAROLINE had two daughters: (*a*) Letitia, born 25 April 1802; married Marquis Pepoli; (*b*) Louise-Julie-Caroline, born at Paris 22 March 1805; died at Ravenna, 1 December 1889; married 25 October 1825 Count Jules Rasponi. Caroline's grandson Joachim (1834–1901) married (1854) a daughter of Marshal Berthier, and their son, Joachim (b. 1856), married a great-granddaughter of Marshal Ney, by whom he had five sons, all of whom distinguished themselves in the Great War: Joachim, Alexandre, Charles, Paul, and Jérôme.

14. NAPOLEON JOSEPH. His daughter, Letitia, died near Turin, 25 October 1926.

18. ROLAND died in 1923.

20. NAPOLEON VICTOR died at Brussels 3 May 1926.

TITLES CONFERRED BY NAPOLEON

An asterisk is affixed to the names of his Marshals

*Augereau, Duc de Castiglione.
*Bernadotte, Prince de Ponte Corvo.
*Berthier, Chief of Staff; Prince de Neuchâtel, Prince de Wagram.
*Bessières, Duc d'Istrie; Commander of the Old Guard.
Bonaparte, Joseph (King of Naples), King of Spain.
Bonaparte, Louis, King of Holland.
Bonaparte, Jérôme, King of Westphalia.
*Brune, Comte.
Cambacérès, Arch-Chancellor; Duc de Parme.
Caulaincourt, Duc de Vicence; Master of Horse; Minister of Foreign Affairs (1814).
Champagny, Duc de Cadore; Minister of Foreign Affairs (1807–1811)
Chaptal, Minister of the Interior; Comte de Chanteloup.
Clarke, Minister of War; Duc de Feltre.
*Davout, Duc d'Auerstädt, Prince d'Eckmühl.
Drouet, Comte d'Erlon.
Duroc, Grand Marshal of the Palace; Duc de Frioul.
Eugène (Beauharnais), Viceroy of Italy.
Fesch (Cardinal), Grand Almoner.
Fouché, Minister of Police (1804–1810); Duc d'Otrante.
*Grouchy, Comte.
*Jourdan, Comte.
Junot, Duc d'Abrantès.
*Kellermann, Duc de Valmy.
*Lannes, Duc de Montebello.
Lavalette, Comte; Minister of Posts.
Lebrun, Duc de Plaisance.
*Lefebvre, Duc de Dantzig.
*Macdonald, Duc de Tarante.
Maret, Minister of Foreign Affairs (1811–1814); Duc de Bassano.
*Marmont, Duc de Raguse.
*Masséna, Duc de Rivoli; Prince d'Essling.
Mollien, Comte; Minister of the Treasury.
*Moncey, Duc de Conegliano.
*Mortier, Duc de Trévise.
Mouton, Comte de Lobau.
*Murat (Grand Duc de Berg); King of Naples.
*Ney, Duc d'Elchingen; Prince de la Moskova.
*Oudinot, Duc de Reggio.
Pasquier, Duc de; Prefect of Police.
Savary, Duc de Rovigo; Minister of Police (1810–1814).
*Sérurier, Comte.
*Soult, Duc de Dalmatie.
*Saint-Cyr, Marquis de.
*Suchet, Duc d'Albuféra.
Talleyrand, Minister of Foreign Affairs (1799–1807); Grand Chamberlain (1804–1808); Prince de Bénévent.
Vandamme, Comte.
*Victor, Duc de Bellune.

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